

# N I N C

October 2011  
Vol. 22, No. 10

## Quick Tips for Rebooting Your Writing Habit

BY ARIELLE FORD

With Labor Day come and gone, it's time for that collective annual sigh—our silent acknowledgement of the pending To Do's we willfully waylaid during the lazy, hazy days of summer.

For many authors, that means rebooting the writing habit we put aside in favor of beach outings and barbeques.

While that thought may initially cause angst, I find, both for myself and the many authors I've worked with over the years, that it's the anticipation of writing, not writing itself, that produces anxiety.

Once we're engrossed in the craft of writing, time melts away, basic needs like hunger barely register, and we're transported to a magical place where words flow through us.

The key to achieving that timeless, focused state, I've learned, is making your writing time sacred. To help you re-immense yourself in your own writing, I wanted to share some of the helpful tips I've gotten over the years from bestselling authors and top editors.

**Get comfortable.** If your dining chairs are the least comfortable ones in the house, you're not going to want to sit in them for very long, which means the dining room is not the place to write. Find a spot that feels good to you, whether it's the comfy chair at your local Starbucks or your home office.

**Okay, not *that* comfortable.** Beware of the bed and that cozy chair where you love to nap. You want to feel relaxed and creative—not sleepy.

**Turn it off. All of it.** Between smart phones, e-readers and iPads—not to mention Facebook, shiny new magazines, and television—distractions abound. Shut down your mobile devices and remove any tempting diversions from your midst. One *New York Times* bestselling author I know writes on a computer in her basement that has no Internet connection.

**Make it a family affair.** When you're home, your kids and spouse are likely to consider you fair game. Let them know you'll be writing for the next hour or two, and ask them not to disturb you. One author friend of mine wraps a bright yellow scarf around her office doorknob. Her family knows that means mom is writing, and is not to be disturbed unless the house really is burning down.

### INSIDE this ISSUE

<i>Voice of NINC: Digital Rights and Harlequin</i> .....	3
<i>Fighting Uphill</i> .....	5
<i>Writing Is Taxing: Dependent Care Credit</i> .....	10
<i>E-Books: Unintended Consequences</i> .....	12
<i>41 Over 40: Novelists Debuting Over Age 40</i> .....	13
<i>Not Your Usual Writing Advice:</i>	
<i>Family, Communication, and Writing</i> .....	14
<i>The Mad Scribbler: Stranger in a Strange Land</i> .....	16
<i>Bulletin Board</i> .....	19

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Address changes may be made on the  
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For members without Internet access,  
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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: James LePore  
leporej5@optonline.net

### New Applicants:

Karen Moser (Karen Kendall) Weston, FL  
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### 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.

### 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.

## Digital Rights and Harlequin

*The following letter was written and sent on behalf of Novelists, Inc. in response to the letter Harlequin recently sent to agents regarding a proposed change in royalty rates.*

To: Ms. Donna Hayes, Publisher and CEO of Harlequin Enterprises Ltd.  
Ms. Loriana Sacilotto, Executive VP, Global Publishing and Strategy, Harlequin Enterprises Ltd.

Dear Donna and Loriana,

While we at Novelists, Inc. applaud Harlequin's decision to adjust e-book royalty rates in the face of enormous changes in our business, we are concerned that the adjustments have not gone as far as they should.

First, we feel very strongly that the royalties for series works should be consistent with the standard in the industry, which is currently 25% of net receipts. While we can appreciate Harlequin's position that the Harlequin brand has provided an enormous benefit to series authors over the years, we fail to see how this justifies paying series authors a lower royalty, especially given the considerable cost savings involved in digital publishing. In addition, while the Harlequin brand still offers significant advantages on the print side in terms of both display and direct mail, the same is not true in the online bookselling world, where there is no easy way to search for new Harlequin titles by brand and consumers are much more likely to search by author or by genre.

In addition, we are very concerned that the term "net digital receipts" is too vague. We would encourage Harlequin to adopt the policies of several other publishers in setting out a clear definition of this term. We suggest the following language:

"Net Digital Receipts" shall mean all income actually received by the Publisher from sales of e-book versions of the Work minus any applicable taxes, handling or processing fees paid by Publisher. No deductions shall be made for normal overhead expenses and no third party shall be engaged to broker sales between the Publisher and the primary bookseller.

Finally, we believe that, in the same spirit of acknowledgment of a greatly changing industry, Harlequin should take this time to revise its out-of-print clause to address how digital publishing has made its current o/p clause less relevant. Since digital books are perpetually "in print," the current o/p clause makes reversion virtually impossible, regardless of how many copies of the work are actually being sold. We do not believe it was Harlequin's intention to impose such restrictions on its authors, and we do not believe that most authors signed their contracts with the belief that the reversion clause was essentially impossible to execute. Therefore, we suggest the following language:

If, three years from the date of the Publisher's first publication, the Work shall not be available for sale in any edition by the Publisher or any of its licensees, the Author may request that the Publisher revert its rights to the Work. A Work shall be considered available for sale if the author's earnings in the Work total more than \$500 cumulatively over the two consecutive royalty periods prior to the Publisher's receipt of the Author's reversion request.

A representative from Novelists, Inc. would be happy to discuss any of the above points with Harlequin.

Sincerely,  
Novelists, Inc.

## Quick Tips for Rebooting Your Writing Habit

*Continued from page 1* ▶ **Pinpoint your perfect time.** If you're a morning person, don't wait until after dinner to start writing. I personally avoid writing in late afternoons, when my energy is lowest. Deepak Chopra reserves the early morning hours, between 4 a.m. and 9 a.m., for writing, meditating and exercising. Consider your best time of day, and try to establish your writing habit then.

**Let it flow.** When my sister, bestselling author Debbie Ford, was starting her first book, Peter Guzzardi, an editor at Random House, told her to write ten pages per day—without editing a single word of it. Just write, he told her. Follow Guzzardi's advice, and try not to judge what comes out on the page. Just keep going. With practice, you'll learn to let the words flow through you. Some authors describe it as an out-of-body experience that allows them to do their best writing.

**Befriend your fear.** The act of writing, particularly writing unedited, can be scary. Most writers, bestselling authors included, feel this fear at times. The best way I know to overcome it is to accept it—and then get back to writing.

Better yet, follow Julia Cameron's advice in *The Artist's Way* and write about your fear—or whatever is on your mind—in what she calls “morning pages.” (<http://juliacameronlive.com/basic-tools/morning-pages/>)

Morning pages are three pages of handwritten stream of consciousness—about the doctor's appointment you need to schedule, the nagging comment your boss made, the fact that you're worried your book is awful.

“These daily morning meanderings are not meant to be *art*. Or even *writing* ...,” Cameron explains. “Nothing is too petty, too silly, too stupid, or too weird to be included.”

Once your day-to-day concerns are released onto the page, your mind is free, ready to connect on a creative level.

**Dangle your own “carrot.”** You're more likely to stick to your writing habit if there's a prize waiting for you. Whether it's your favorite dessert, a night out with your spouse, or a long, hot bath, promise to give yourself that gift when you've completed your next chapter, or another pre-determined milestone.

Keep in mind, it may take time to find your perfect formula—the right place, time of day, and rituals—to get your writing back on track. If that's the case, don't despair. Know that, as writers, we all struggle to adhere to our writing habit at times. And that's okay—provided we get back to writing. Starting today.

*Arielle Ford has launched the careers of many New York Times bestselling authors including Deepak Chopra, Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Neale Donald Walsch, and Debbie Ford. She is a former book publicist, literary agent, and the author of seven books. Her website is [www.EverythingYouShouldKnow.com](http://www.EverythingYouShouldKnow.com) This article first appeared on The Huffington Post on September 4, 2011. It is reprinted with the permission of the author.*

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### Business Briefs

#### Just in time for the conference...

We've heard for decades about the damage UltraViolet rays can do to our skin, and how covering ourselves with clothing or sunblock is the solution. What those rays actually do is generate a chemical in the body that causes skin cells to die. According to a recent study in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, scientists in Spain have discovered that the flavonoids in grapes can stop that chemical process. Which could be interpreted to mean that Sangría sipped in the sunshine on St. Pete's Beach may not only be enjoyable but good for you ...

#### Coming Soon.....NetBoox?

Now that Amazon is secure in its place as publisher as well as bookseller, it is turning its attention to becoming a book renter. The company is working on a new product line that would provide books for rent using a subscription model similar to NetFlix. The price? \$79 per year. It may be available as soon as this autumn. *The Wall Street Journal* quoted one publishing executive as saying the program “would ... downgrade the value of the book business.”

*GalleyCat*

# Fighting Uphill

BY KRISTINE KATHRYN RUSCH

The struggle begins when we're young. Think of it this way: How many parents, upon hearing that their child wants to be a doctor, lawyer, firefighter, teacher, or nurse, says, *No, you can't. It's too hard or You'll never make money at that or You're not good enough to succeed in that profession.* Parents guide their kids, sure, but they try to guide their kids toward success, and they try to protect their kids from harm. And apparently, a life in the arts is, in our society, perceived as harm.

Then we move on to school where teachers—who, for the most part, have not succeeded in the arts—judge our “talent.” Again, we hear “You're not good enough” or “It's too hard” or “Protect yourself with a real job” as if a job in the arts isn't real.

Those of us who go on to freelance have a stubborn streak or an extra bit of confidence. We also have more drive than the average person because we have started climbing uphill from the moment we declare our intention to become a writer. We have to fight the naysayers.

Some of us fight by compromising.

*New York Times* bestseller Tess Gerritsen became a physician before giving it up to pursue her writing career. As she says in the August *RT Book Reviews* (<http://www.rtbookreviews.com/magazine/august-2011-issue-330>), “I was a writer long before I became a doctor .... But I'm also the daughter of very practical Asian parents, and they insisted that I'd never support myself in the arts, so I took their advice and went to medical school instead.”

Some of us stubbornly refuse to compromise. I deliberately “wasted” my education—a history degree—by not going on to graduate school or law school. I became a reporter because that was a way to make money as a writer, but I always wrote fiction and always tried to market it.

And even when I was making a living as a nonfiction writer, or hell, as a fiction writer, I got told repeatedly that I was being impractical, that I was “lucky,” that I had better prepare for the days when I could no longer follow my dream.

Preemptive disillusionment, I guess. A protection against the future, I suppose. But it didn't matter because the writing process itself was disillusioning. When all of us who are fulltime professional writers of longstanding came into this business, there was only one way to make a living, and that was by publishing traditionally.

A traditionally published writer has to jump through a lot of hoops. Rather than appeal to hundreds of readers, she needs to appeal to a few—the editors and the sales force at the publishing company. Editors issue rejections much more than they issue contracts. Those rejections take the form of tea leaves. Some writers read the tea leaves and decide to leave the business, but the rest of us stay despite even more discouragement. We fight and fight and fight again.

But in fighting, we bend ourselves into pretzels. Are we good at mysteries? Or better at romance? Should we write the same thing over and over or try something new? Should we sell ourselves like actors do? Or should we hide in our rooms like J.D. Salinger? We take whatever advice sounds sensible to us and discard the rest, not because the advice is sensible, but because we are operating in a closed system in which no one knows exactly what makes a book sell.

If we knew what made a book sell, we would repeat that effort with every single book. That's what's difficult about the arts. At a certain point, either the piece works for a certain number of people or it does not.

The certain number of people in traditional publishing are the editors and the sales force. Not the readers. Writers couldn't get to readers without going through the editors and sales force. And that's a finite group who must use their expertise to decide if a book will make a profit for the company or not. ▶

What is that expertise? Experience, yes. A love of reading, yes. And mostly a lot of guesswork. That's the dirty secret of publishing. Editors, the sales force, and the publishers get surprised by a book selling better than expected more often than they get the actual sales figures right. In fact, most profit-and-loss statements developed on a book before publication *are wrong*.

There is no expertise in choosing what will succeed and what won't. There is only expertise in marketing—and sometimes (often) marketing goes awry as well.

In other words, William Goldman's famous words ([http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/william\\_goldman.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/william_goldman.html)) about Hollywood apply to publishing as well: *Nobody knows anything*.

So in the past (and really, honestly, in the present) writers market their work to a small subset of people who claim they know how to sell the work *even when those people are just guessing*. That subset, until 2009 or so, was the only game in town.

Editors, the sales force, and the publishers get | surprised by a book selling better than expected more often than they get the actual sales figures right.

Writers had no choice but to believe what they were being told: only vampire novels sell, only romantic vampire novels sell, include a boy wizard and all will be fine, oh—you failed once so you're unmarketable. And on, and on, and on.

Those of who survived mostly ignored that stuff, and did what Tobias Buckell mentions (<http://www.tobiasbuckell.com/2011/08/25/writers-and-pellets/>) in one of his recent blog posts. We learned what we could control. We could control how much we wrote. We could control how much we mailed. We could control how we reacted to the insanity around us. We could control little else.

It made those of us who survived decades both hard and crazy. We never believed what anyone told us. We only believed in a promise after it was kept. We knew that even success was evanescent, because it could be (and often was) screwed up at a moment's notice.

And then there was the money. Because we got told we couldn't make a living in the arts, most of us never tried. Those of us who actually cared about making a living were told that we couldn't be artists, that we were crass commercial hacks, that we didn't "respect" our business. So many of us who wanted a career in the arts didn't pursue it because it wasn't logical, it didn't seem to follow an existing business model. Most of the smart business minds avoided careers as pure artists—writers, actors, musicians—because it was hard to see a path to profit that didn't include luck. Many of the smart business minds either became publishers themselves or agents, giving up on their dream to do the work themselves, never realizing that they were making a small percentage off the artist so there had to be money in this business somewhere.

And the money started with the artist. That's the biggest crazy-making thing of all. Without the writer's story, there would be no agents, no publishing houses, no bookstores. All of those businesses make their profits off a percentage of what the writer gets for his creation.

But until 2009, the distribution of the writer's work—getting that work to the reader—required a system that the writer couldn't easily access on her own. So she paid pieces of her potential earnings to get to market.

And then indie-publishing came about. The self-publishing revolution, in which it became possible to hit those markets without the intervening percentage-takers. And most writers still believe that it's impossible for them to make a living.

Why? Ah, that's what we'll explore in this series, among other things. The series started with last week's post, "Unexpected Gold in Self-Help Books" (<http://kriswrites.com/2011/08/31/the-business-rusch-unexpected-gold-in-self-help-books/>) and will continue for the next few weeks.

But let's continue with the way writers were trained. Because the business minds left writing and/or failed to band together with other business-minded writers, the writers who remained never really questioned the system. And most writers have no idea whether or not one of their trusted "partners"—a publisher, say, or an agent—is skimming a bit on the side.

(Publishers have skimmed for years. Lawsuits fighting inaccurate reporting of royalties have gone on for decades, usually against big companies. The audit clause in publishing contracts is, for the most part, a new development, caused by a wave of fraud about 30 years ago. Now publishers are underreporting e-book royalties. (<http://kriswrites.com/2011/04/20/the-business-rusch-royalty-statements-update/>) Incorrect royalty statements are a common problem, not an uncommon one. And have been from the beginning of traditional publishing.)

Until recently, the writer who complained about the way things got done was labeled “naïve” or worse, labeled a troublemaker. Word got out through publishing circles about the troublemakers, making an effective blacklist.

You wanted to get published in the days when the only way to get your book to market was to go through traditional routes? Then you had to expect a certain amount of underreporting, incompetence, and just plain theft. Writers who survived looked on that as the cost of doing business, the way that a retail store owner factors in a certain percentage of sales lost to shoplifting.

Even with success, the traditional long-term writing career was crazy-making. Sure, you could be a *New York Times* bestseller, but reviewers and others could call you a hack and say you couldn’t write. Very few writers could publish their laundry lists. Writer after writer—good sellers all—were told they couldn’t publish anything except the series (or type of book) that made them famous. When the writer tried, they were rejected (yes, still) or the publishing company would actively work to mismarket the “strange” book so that readers would know it was an outlier.

Again, nobody knew anything, so everyone tried to go with what worked before.

All of this should have made all successful writers batshit crazy. Yet most writers aren’t. Instead, they retreat. They don’t talk to anyone about what they do or how they do it—much like they were when they were kids with a dream that the adults constantly disparaged.

In her blog, writer Sarah Hoyt (<http://accordingtohoyt.com/2011/08/31/he-beats-me-but-he's-my-publisher/>) compared writers to battered spouses. She says that some of what she hears from writers reminds her of the reasons battered spouses stay with their abusers. I have to admit, I’ve had that same thought myself, but I’ve never written a blog post about it because it seems too simple.

Writers do react badly to any suggestions for change, from leaving an agent who is clearly no longer interested in working for them to staying with a publisher even as the publisher’s contracts and advances get worse. But I think the way that writers act has a lot more to do with crisis response than with abuse.

The writers who stay in the business become survivors. “Survivor” is an interesting word because it implies that the survivor went through something traumatic. Indeed, my handy dandy Encarta World English Dictionary defines the word “survive” as managing to stay alive “especially in difficult situations” or “after something such as an accident or war that threatens life.”

Or livelihood. Something threatening.

Think about it: from childhood those of us who wanted to go into the arts got bombarded with reasons why we couldn’t. Then we went through a trial that led to success, but success in a field that considers you only as good as your last bit of work. It’s not an abuse/abuser relationship because that implies something personal. The abuser has a personal stake in what happens to the abused, just like the abused has a stake with the abuser.

But publishing, like any business, is impersonal. It’s a business, and while the personal relationships might be good ones, the professional relationship between a writer (any writer) and traditional publishing is difficult at best. ▶

Please remember to vote for the 2012 slate of NINC officers by October 31, 2011! Print out the ballot that appeared in the September issue of *Nink*, or go green and go to the Members Only area of [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com) and vote online!

Writers who have gone through decades in traditional publishing react the way that people who have been through a major national crisis react. No two people react to a crisis the same way, particularly a prolonged crisis, and yet each of those people have scars from that crisis.

Both of my parents lived through the Depression. My mother, orphaned early in those years, never believed she had security. She didn't hoard anything, but she also failed to believe that anything would continue, particularly anything financial. Good fortune, she believed (hell, she *knew*), could be snatched away in an instant. But that didn't make her someone who celebrated the good fortune. Instead, she was someone who watched it warily, waiting for it to disappear.

My father, from a stable household with a government paycheck (my grandfather was a rural mail carrier), attended college in those years, and spent money freely. The financial hardships of that period touched him, but not personally. Still, he understood my mother's fears, because he had seen so many people lose everything during that time.

I have friends who survived 9/11. Other friends who have served in various wars. Veterans in particular react differently to their time in war zones. Some never really come home. Others remain continually on alert. Some only react when something viscerally reminds them of the war itself.

Go back over my list from last week, (<http://kriswrites.com/2011/08/31/the-business-rusch-unexpected-gold-in-self-help-books/>) and then think of those items in terms of survival mechanisms from a war fought mostly inside your own mind. A writer had to find coping mechanisms to deal with a constant barrage of negativity from the outside. Some of that negativity didn't just come in the form of words: some of it came in the form of deeds. People will actively try to stop writers from achieving their goals, sometimes with the mistaken idea that they are "helping" the writer.

No wonder writers have a bunker mentality. No wonder so many writers become quiet and never really speak of their work to anyone else.

For years, Dean and I taught a master class for professional writers, those who've had success and had run into a bad patch in their careers. We worked on a variety of things to get the writer moving forward again. One of the most important things that we did was a role-playing game that showed writers how to cope with things outside of their control. We found that role-playing was the only thing that worked, because simply telling writers didn't help at all. They had to experience the craziness that was traditional publishing before they could figure out what kind of coping mechanisms worked for them.

We don't teach the master class any more. Most of what we taught as recently as five years ago is now out of date. Traditional publishing is only one choice that a writer has, instead of the only choice. The fact that writers now have a lot of choice makes all the difference in the world. Writers can act like normal business people, making decisions based on logic, and finances, and an established business model.

But most writers aren't making those choices. They close their eyes, stick their fingers in their ears, and sing to themselves when someone tries to tell them about all the changes.

This isn't willful stupidity. It's a survival skill. It's a bunker mentality. They focus on one thing and one thing only—the writing—because, in the past, if they focused on anything else, it would destroy what creativity they had left.

Now, however, that bunker mentality will kill careers. Writers have to figure out what behaviors they've learned that no longer apply to the brave new world of publishing, and then they have to move beyond those behaviors.

A lot of you wrote to me last week and said you recognized yourself in that list. That's a good first step. Once you identify the problem, you can actually work on solving the problem.

This week's column is about the second step. You have to figure out where the behavior came from. Did you learn not to take risks from your parents? Or from some bad experiences in the past? Or are you a natural conservative—the kind of person who never willingly takes risks?

Go back over that list and ask yourself those questions about the points you resonate with. Figure out where those ideas and behaviors came from. Because you have to know what caused them before you can change them.



Next week, we'll start working on individual items and how they apply (or don't apply) in the new world of publishing. We're about to walk into a new battle. We're already seeing the battle lines get drawn.

The writer who survives—and I use that word on purpose—is the one who knows what her strengths and weaknesses are, both in writing and in business. She is also the writer who is flexible enough to roll with the punches and to make changes where necessary.

Here's the thing, though. Don't expect change to be easy. Change is hard. But it's worthwhile.

Of course, you already know that. You know how to take risks and you know how to make it through a minefield. After all, you're a professional writer despite what your parents and teachers said. You've made it through some of the toughest things traditional publishing can dish out.

You'll figure out your path in this new world as well. It'll just take a while—and a bit of belief in yourself.

*Kristine Kathryn Rusch is a bestselling, award-winning writer who can't seem to stick to a genre. She writes sf/f, paranormal romance, romantic suspense, and hard-boiled detective fiction. Her work has been nominated for most major awards, including the Edgar (under two separate names) and the Nebula. She's won the Hugo (twice) and many reader's choice awards. Her latest novels are Utterly Charming, City of Ruins, and the upcoming Anniversary Day, which will appear on Audible as an exclusive, followed in print and e-book from WMG Publishing. This post first appeared on her nonfiction blog, The Business Rusch, on September 7, 2011. It is reprinted with the permission of the author.*

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## *Business Briefs*

### **Borders Fades Away**

A series of articles in *PW Daily* chronicled the death-spiral of Borders. At the end of August Books-A-Million was granted permission to take over the leases for 14 Borders stores for the tidy sum of \$934,259. The changeover, which will take place from mid-September to the beginning of October, will add seven states to Books-A-Million's coverage: Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota and Michigan while, at the same time, Books-A-Million is closing BAM outlets in North Carolina and South Carolina.

Hudson Group purchased the remaining 26 Borders airport stores. The firm has been buying out Borders airport locations over the last two years. But there was bad news for the remaining small Borders locations: There were only eight bids for 150 small Borders stores.

### **Freelance Settlement Kills Google Settlement**

In a follow-up to the landmark case on digital rights, *Tasini vs New York Times*, the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected a settlement in a class-action suit brought by freelance writers and, in doing so, may have destroyed the still-pending Google settlement, according to legal experts. The appellate court held that the lower court had erred in approving the \$18 million settlement because the "plaintiffs failed to adequately represent the interests of all class members." Translated from legalese to regularspeak, this means that the court has decided that large groups of general authors cannot be certified as groups with regard to filing class-action suits, and legal experts believe that establishing smaller groups of authors, assembling them into a body of plaintiffs in the Google case, and then attempting to negotiate a settlement would be too cumbersome, too expensive, too time-consuming, and the likelihood of success would be too small. In the original case, *Tasini v. New York Times*, freelancers represented by the National Writers Union sued publications in the late 1990s for using their works without permission, and, in one iteration or another, the case has been tumbling about in the courts ever since.

*PW Daily*

### **Now Book Clubs Can Find YOU**

GalleyCat has established an online directory of Authors Who Visit Book Clubs that enables book clubs to find authors who will visit with them in person or online. Book clubbers can search by location, genre, or name. Go to <http://www.facebook.com/galleycat> to place your website and contact information in the directory.

*Galley Cat*



## **WRITING is TAXING**

By Diane Kelly

# **Dependent Care Credit**

Do you incur expenses for care for your child or an elderly or disabled family member? If so, you may qualify for the Dependent Care Credit.

To qualify for the credit, you must meet several tests.

### **Test #1: The care must be for a “qualifying person.”**

A qualifying person is:

1. your child who is under age 13 when the care was provided and who is either:
  - a. your dependent or,
  - b. if you are divorced or separated and the child is not your dependent, then:
    1. the child received over half of his or her support from you and the child’s other parent,
    2. the child was in the custody of one or both parents for more than half the year, and
    3. you were the child’s custodial parent (defined as the parent who has custody of the child for the greater number of nights during the year).
2. your spouse who is not physically or mentally able to care for himself or herself and who lived with you for at least half the year, or
3. another person, such as a disabled family member or elderly parent, who lived with you for at least half the year and whom you claim as a dependent or could have claimed as a dependent if not for the fact that:
  - a. the person’s income exceeded the annual income threshold for qualifying as a dependent,
  - b. the person filed a joint return with his or her spouse, or
  - c. you could be claimed as a dependent on someone else’s return.

### **Test #2: You (and your spouse, if filing jointly) must have earned income.**

Earned income includes your net income from self employment (such as net income from your writing business), as well as wages, tips, and other taxable employee compensation. Earned income does not include pensions, annuities, Social Security benefits, Workers’ Compensation, interest, dividends, Unemployment Compensation, scholarships/fellowships, or child support. A spouse who is a full-time student is treated as having earned income for purposes of this credit even if that spouse does not actually earn any income.

### **Test #3: The care costs must be work-related.**

Dependent-care costs are considered work-related if the care is provided to allow you and your spouse to work, look for work, or to attend school full time. Work can be performed for others or in your own business, and can be full time or part time.

You must generally pro-rate the total care costs if some of the costs are not work-related. If the costs cover both days on which you work full time and days on which you work part time, you can treat any day on which you work at least one hour as a full day of work for purposes of pro-rating the costs. In addition, if you would incur the same cost regardless of how many days you work, you can claim the entire cost. ▶

For instance, if your provider requires you to pay for a full week or full month regardless of how many days you actually use the care, the entire cost will be considered work-related even if you only work some of the days for which care is provided.

#### **Test #4: The care provider must meet certain qualifications.**

To qualify for the credit, payments cannot be made to someone you claim as a dependent, your spouse, or the parent of the qualifying person if the qualifying person is your child under the age of 13. If you pay one of your children to serve as the caregiver, the child who serves as the caregiver must be age 19 or older by the end of the year and cannot be your dependent.

#### **Test #5: Your filing status cannot be married filing separately.**

Your filing status can be single, head of household, qualifying widow(er) with dependent child, or married filing jointly. If your filing status is married filing separately, you cannot claim the credit.

#### **Limitations**

The credit ranges from 20% up to 35%, depending on your total income. The higher your income, the lower your credit percentage.

The credit applies to a maximum of \$3,000 in care costs per year for one qualifying person and \$6,000 for two or more qualifying persons. However, if you or your spouse receive dependent-care benefits from your employer and these benefits are excluded or deducted from your income, you must reduce the \$3,000/\$6,000 limit by the amount of those benefits.

Certain types of expenses are not considered dependent-care costs, including amounts paid for food, lodging, clothing, education, or entertainment. For example, while the cost of a day camp would qualify, the cost of an overnight camp would not. Also, while the cost of private school for a child in kindergarten or a higher grade level does not qualify, the cost of before-school or after-school care for a child in kindergarten or a higher grade would qualify. Summer-school programs and tutoring do not qualify. The costs of pre-school programs do qualify, however, since the educational component is generally nominal compared to the babysitting service provided.

You must provide the caregiver's name, address, and Social Security number. Some caregivers do not want to provide their Social Security number, either because they are not reporting the income they earn from providing services or due to identity theft concerns. However, without this information, you cannot claim the credit unless you can show that you used due diligence in attempting to obtain this information.

If you pay a person to provide both personal care and housekeeping services, you must pro-rate the expenses for purposes of the credit.

Form 2441 must be filed to claim the credit. See Publication 503 and the instructions for Form 2441 at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for more details.

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

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## *Business Briefs*

### **Seventy-Year-Old Classic is an App**

*The Poky Little Puppy*, a Golden Book perennial, has now made its debut in the digital age. Priced at \$4.99, the app offers interactive pictures and games, as well as stickers that help readers create a story. Readers can also record themselves on each page. The "cover" even retains the memorable golden spine of the early 50-cent copies.

*PW Daily*

# ***E-Books: Unintended Consequences***

**BY WARREN ADLER**

While I have often patted myself on the back for recognizing more than fifteen years ago that e-books would one day surpass the printed book as the ultimate first choice of dedicated readers everywhere, I had not reckoned on the unintended consequences of an unfiltered tsunami of self-published books that would one day overtake the traditional distribution patterns of the publishing industry.

The number of self-published e-books has surpassed and will continue to surpass, by far, books published through the time-honored process of editing and distribution that has been the practice of publishing companies for centuries.

A cottage industry that was once denigrated as an exercise in vanity for wannabe writers who could not get published through established channels, has become a burgeoning industry for entrepreneurs who produce, promote, publish and sell marketing services to those authors who choose to go this route.

Online bookstores such as Amazon, Nook and iPad are eager to publish these efforts, looking to increase the volume of sales through betting that every book published will garner some sales, however miniscule. If every author of a self-published book, for example, sold 25 copies to relatives and friends, that would result in sales of millions of which the online bookstore would get a piece.

Believe me, I am in no way insulting the efforts of such authors who choose this mode of self-expression. There is a lot to say for the psychic joys of creating and publishing a book and hopefully getting it in the hands of a reader. Many of these authors have spent sweat, treasure and time writing and then trying to market their work to agents, editors, publishers, film producers and whoever is in the business of monetizing their efforts. The overwhelming majority have not succeeded in attracting their attention for reasons that are often obscure and baffling.

And while there are countless categories of books being offered within non-fiction and fiction areas, my own authorial interest is in the fate of the mainstream novel, a long form work of the imagination that cannot be defined by any established genre.

Having grown up on a rich diet of reading, studying and writing mainstream novels, a process that I personally consider among the highest forms of artistic expression, I worry that the ever growing glut of novels thrown into cyberspace will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the reader to differentiate between authors and find those who reach into the heart of their understanding, insight and pleasure.

With the shrinking output of traditional sources of book information and reviews in newspapers and magazines, the fractionalizing of online sites dealing with reviewing books and the collapse of the usual so called quality filters, the methods of book selection, particularly serious mainstream fiction, is severely restricted.

The great breakout books by serious authors that gained attention in the last century like Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Joyce, Greene, Maugham, Waugh, O'Hara and numerous others that transcend my personal bias will be tough acts to follow simply because they will be difficult to cut from the giant pack of novel offerings. Authors will be hard put to get their books noticed, reviewed and honestly recommended.

Of course, traditional publishers are attempting a wide variety of marketing experiments and strategies to extend the public reach of their authors, but the impact on advances and sales will be profound. Authors already well branded in the age before e-books will survive, of course, but their readership will diminish in the future as the marketing funnels become clogged and their original enthusiastic fans die out.

There will be opportunities in the film and television markets if authors are lucky enough to have their books adapted to those mediums, especially if the producers keep the book titles intact. But even that will be no guarantee of crossover sales.

*Continued on page 20* ▶

# 41 Over 40: Novelists Debuting Over Age 40

BY RANDY SUSAN MEYERS

I tried to resist writing this—especially after my plea against categorizing authors. ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/randy-susan-meyers/post\\_761\\_b\\_698413.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/randy-susan-meyers/post_761_b_698413.html)) Plus, so many of us hide our age in this world of never-get-old, unearthing this information, even in our Google-ized world, was difficult.

But, recently, along with the plethora of [lists](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/7835258/Are-these-Britains-best-20-novelists-under-40.html) (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/7835258/Are-these-Britains-best-20-novelists-under-40.html>) (<http://www.newyorker.com/fiction/20-under-40/writers-q-and-a>) of writers under 40, I was faced with the declaration that, as headlined in a *Guardian UK* article (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/jan/18/robert-mccrum-literature-books-age>) about writers, “Let’s Face It, After 40 You’re Past It.”

Then I read Sam Tanenhaus opine ([http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/20/books/review/Tanenhaus-t.html?\\_r=2](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/20/books/review/Tanenhaus-t.html?_r=2)) in the *New York Times* that there was “an essential truth about fiction writers: They often compose their best and most lasting work when they are young. ‘There’s something very misleading about the literary culture that looks at writers in their 30s and calls them ‘budding’ or ‘promising,’ when in fact they’re peaking.’”

Thus, in the interest not of division, but of keeping up the flagging spirits of those who don’t want to be pushed out on the ice floe until after publishing all those words jangling in their head, I present **41 Over 40**:

**Paul Harding:** His debut novel, *Tinkers*, won the 2010 Pulitzer Prize, published when he was 42.

**Robin Black:** *If I Loved You I Would Tell You This* was written when she was 48.

**Holly LeCraw:** Wrote *The Swimming Pool* at 43.

**Julia Glass:** She was in her early 40s when she published *Three Junes*.

**Charles Bukowski:** His first novel, *Post Office*, was published at 49.

**James Michener:** His debut, *Tales Of The South Pacific*, was published when he was 40—he went on to publish more than 40 titles.

**Sherwood Anderson:** The author of *Winesburg, Ohio* published his first novel at the age of 40.

**Amy MacKinnon:** Debuted *Tethered* in her 40s.

**Henry Miller:** His first published book, *Tropic Of Capricorn*, was released when he was over 40.

**Tillie Olsen:** She published *Tell Me A Riddle* just shy of 50.

**Edward P. Jones:** He was 41 when his first book, *Lost In The City*, came out.

**Claire Cook:** Her first novel, *Ready To Fall*, came out when she was 45.

**Chris Abouzeid:** He published his first novel, *Anatopsis*, at 46.

**Kylie Ladd:** *After The Fall*, her debut, was published when she was 41.

**Lynne Griffin:** She was 49 when her debut, *Life Without Summer*, came out.

**Elizabeth Strout:** *Amy & Isabel* debuted when she was 42.

**M.J. Rose:** Her first novel came out when she was in her mid-forties.

**Melanie Benjamin:** She was 42 when she debuted.

**Therese Fowler:** Wrote *Souvenir* when she was 40.

**Margaret Walker:** Wrote *Jubilee*, her only novel, at 51.

**Raymond Chandler:** He debuted at 51 with *The Big Sleep*.

**Belva Plain:** Her first novel, *Evergreen*, was published at 50.

**Alex Haley:** His debut novel, *Roots*, came out when he was 55.

**John Clinch:** Debuted with *Finn* at 52.

**Wendy Clinch:** Jon’s wife. Debuted this year [2010] with *Double Black*.

**Iris Gomez:** *Try To Remember* published in her 50s.

**Joseph Wallace:** Debuted this year [2010] with *Diamond Ruby*.

Continued on page 20 ►

# Not Your Usual Writing Advice — Family, Communication, and Writing

BY JOANN GROTE

***“Adapt yourself to the things among which your lot has been cast, and love sincerely the fellow creatures with whom destiny has ordained that you shall live.”***

— Marcus Aurelius



Photo by Sabrina Ingram

It's often difficult for non-writers to understand the writer's world. For most people, "work" is performed at a place someone else owns. That place, the hours one works, and the work one performs are determined by the "boss". To these people, a working writer's life can seem a fantasy life.

I've heard it said that writers must teach the people in their lives how writers work. Sometimes that translates into writers demanding their own space and time to write; I've expressed those needs myself. But demanding something of others is not the same as obtaining their respect and support for your writing.

Recently Joe, my better half, asked me, "How is the book coming?"

"Slow, but I'm making progress," I responded. "How was *your* day?"

He answered in great detail. Later he listed all the things he was trying to fit into the hours between his job and sleep. As for most of us, his list was longer than the amount of time available. He asked, "Do you want to do any of the things on my list for me?"

My defenses and anger kicked in immediately. "I have my own list," I informed him. (Don't we all?) When did he expect me to do the things on his list? When I should be writing on my book?

"I was only joking," he assured me.

Maybe, but maybe not. Experience has left me with the impression that, unless I'm within a week of deadline, family—immediate and extended—believes it's no problem for me to take time from my writing to do something for them. (I am not addressing things that I *need* to do.) After all, writing can be done any time, can't it? Which might be restated as: writing can be done when the writer isn't doing something another family member prefers.

Reflecting later on the conversation with Joe, I realized some things that changed the way I discuss and present my work to family.

I realized that Joe shares his work experience with me daily: where he worked (it varies), his interactions with co-workers, his frustrations, unexpected occurrences, etc. It struck me that to make my writing world more real to him, I must share more of it with him. Communication—what a novel idea for a writer.

I seldom speak with others—even other writers or editors—about my stories. This may work well for the muse, but it doesn't help make my writing "job" real to my family.

The time between the germination of a story idea and a contract is longer than the average worker's pay period. The time between the idea and the completion of the book is longer still. This alone makes a writing career difficult for non-writers to grasp. The time it takes to write a novel is a long time not to discuss it with the people closest to me.

Now when Joe asks about my day, I might respond with something like "The new scene I started went well for a couple pages. Then I got stumped. I planned to send the characters in one direction, but another idea came to mind. It would be a major change, so I spent the rest of the afternoon working through some

ways it would effect the story, trying to decide which direction will make the story stronger.” He understands now that a novel rarely arrives full-blown in a writer’s mind, after which the writer basically takes dictation.

I also realized that one reason family members ask us to give up writing time to do things for them is that the other things seem more tangible than writing. If I mow the yard, not only does Joe not need to mow it, he can see the results of the time I spent mowing.

The more tangible our writing appears to non-writing family members, the more respect and support they are apt to give us and our writing time. “Show, don’t tell” works as well in real life as in story.

One day Joe asked how much of my work-in-progress was done because I’d been working on it for so long. I showed him the 3-ring binders that hold my WIP: one for research; one for my synopsis and notes on character and plot points; and two with my manuscript to date. Each two-inch binder is full. It made my work real to him in a new way.

Telling him my daily page count also helps, as does saying, “I finished the tenth chapter and started the eleventh.”

Most of my writing life, I left my notebooks, research, and WIP on my desk from start to finish while writing. When I moved in with Joe and his children, I gave up the luxury of a writing space of my own and developed the habit of putting my writing away when it was time for the kids to come home from school or Joe to arrive from work. They seldom saw me working, and occasionally expressed doubt that I’d worked that day at all. Now I leave my WIP on the screen and my notebooks out until the space is needed by someone else. My family can see that I’ve been working and that my writing time resulted in something that can be touched and read.

NINC member Judy Baer wrote much of her popular young-adult series in the kitchen surrounded by her teenagers and their friends, and used what many writers would consider chaos to her advantage. The teens’ manner of speaking, acting and the topics that held their interest found their way into Judy’s stories. Writing in the midst of teens made her stories more real to her readers, and made her writing more real to her children.

She liked to wait up for them at night, she said, “that’s the time they were the most open and talkative. If I was in the kitchen when they arrived and asked them what they’d been doing, all the kids/friends would tell me what had been going on, who they’d seen, what they’d done. If I asked them in the a.m. what they’d done the night before, the usual answer was, ‘Oh, nothing.’ With teens, timing is everything!”

“Once or twice, I specifically ‘interviewed’ my daughters and friends for books I was writing—experiences they’d had, etc. Their input was invaluable and one of my very favorite stories came out of such an interview.” After they graduated from high school, she shifted from writing young adult novels to chick lit, and again turned to her daughters for help. “They were happy to tell me where I was right on and also the things I had all wrong!”

Multi-published author Kieran Kramer advises writers to include their children in their process and to tell even the little ones the gist of the story. “Ask the children for help with describing your characters, settings, even plot points, etc. They’ll be thrilled, and you’ll feel like your personal passion is integrated into the family dynamic even more. Not only that, you won’t believe how your kids’ ideas will save you sometimes! Remember, they think in very fresh ways. We forget how wise and imaginative they are.”

In the past when Joe caught me daydreaming about my story and asked what I was thinking my usual response was, “Nothing important.” Now I answer more honestly: “I’m working out a knot in my story’s plot.” Sometimes I share more details, something I never used to do. Now, instead of asking what I’m thinking, Joe will often say with a smile, “You’re working on your story, aren’t you?” I love that!

Almost as much as I love the pride in his voice when he introduces me to someone and adds, “She’s a writer.”

*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).*

# The Mad Scribbler

By Laura Resnick



## Stranger in a Strange Land

**“Experience, which destroys innocence, also leads one back to it.”**  
— James Baldwin

I’ve worked with some editors over the years who were mediocre or marginal; and I’ve worked with a few who were disastrously incompetent and unprofessional, as well as with the occasional editor whose petulant rudeness (or abusive hysteria) defies any rational explanation in the context of doing business as an adult.

But despite all that, by and large, I actually have a pretty good opinion of editors and their profession, precisely because most of the editors I’ve worked with were good at their jobs, and some of them were outstanding. I’ve worked with editors who taught me more about my craft, who helped me improve my material, and who were engaged, enthusiastic, and encouraging. I’ve worked with editors who were excellent administrators, as well as with editors who were true champions on behalf of my work within their publishing programs. So, yes, despite some negative or truly awful experiences with editors (which every writer who’s been around for a while is bound to have), I’ve mostly had very good experiences with the editors I’ve worked with, and I generally think well of the editorial profession.

It’s *publishers* that I traditionally can’t stand, not editors.

It’s *publishers* which, throughout my entire career, have consistently merited the sobriquet (learned at my mother’s knee—she being a writer’s wife) of “pirates, rapists, and thieves.”

Obviously, the combination of an unprofessional or incompetent editor *and* a typical publisher is the worst possible circumstance. I’ve always found it much like being trapped between a mugger and a sewage mishap: At that point, there are no realistic prospects whatsoever that the evening will go well.

However, even the combination of an *excellent* editor with a typical publisher has often meant that I’m left holding the bag, since an outstanding editor is nonetheless subject to the policies and procedures of the publisher. I am on very friendly terms with a number of editors I’ve worked with in the past, and there are several with whom I would love to work again; but I do not remember any of my publishers fondly—in fact, if you mention their names around me without warning, I sometimes flinch involuntarily. (You think I’m kidding?)

My first publisher dumped me. My second publisher folded shortly after signing me for a second book. My third publisher dumped me after one book, simultaneously breaking every promise made to me there. My next publisher withdrew an offer after putting it on the table. Two more of my publishers dumped me after one book apiece. Another of my publishers disappeared, *along with all my royalty earnings*, soon after our sole



book together was released; four years later, that book is *still* available in retail (and I still receive no royalty statements or earnings). My association with another of my publishers was so demoralizing, demeaning, frustrating, and exhausting that I grew chronically ill and depressed because of it. One of my former publishers pirated a book of mine after having reverted all rights, then behaved very badly when I asked them to stop. (So I hired a lawyer, and they behaved badly to her, too; but we got it resolved in the end.) And so on and so forth.

So you can perhaps imagine how unfamiliar—nay, bizarre!—it is for me to be writing these days for a publisher about whom I have only good things to say. It's a house that I (it feels so weird to write this) love working with. This is such an unprecedented situation, I hardly know what to do with myself. It feels ... *unnatural*.

I'm under contract these days to DAW Books, where I have delivered three novels and currently owe two more. This science fiction/fantasy house was founded decades ago by the legendary Donald A. Wollheim (hence: D A W), and it publishes such leading names as Mercedes Lackey, Patrick Rothfuss, Tad Williams, Melanie Rawn, C.J. Cherryh, and the late Marion Zimmer Bradley. When Wollheim died, he left the business to his daughter, Elizabeth (Betsy) Wollheim. She subsequently invited longtime *sf/f* editor Sheila Gilbert to become her co-publisher at DAW. Together, the two of them have more than 70 years of combined experience in publishing. DAW has been a consistently successful program under their hands-on management for the past two decades.

Although DAW, like many other houses, was acquired by a large company (Penguin USA) during the era of conglomeration, my consistent experience (like that of other DAW authors) is that the house has managed to maintain an unusual degree of independence within that structure. All decisions at DAW are made directly by co-publishers Betsy Wollheim and Sheila Gilbert rather than getting lost in layers of corporate hierarchy.

Since Wollheim and Gilbert are also the editors for most DAW writers, this makes DAW the most streamlined house I've ever written for. Whether I want to sell a book, get a raise, change a contractual clause, or get my galley's re-set with a larger font, my editor also happens to be my publisher, and she is thus in charge of all these matters—meaning I not only get a *decision* (whereas, at most houses, a writer's requests are quickly lost in the corporate hierarchy of plausible deniability), I also get it *quickly* in most instances.

DAW releases about 60 books per year, and they do this with a staff of only six people, including Betsy and Sheila. Thus, I have found, DAW offers the best of both worlds: the resources of Penguin USA, the second largest publisher in the country, combined with the personal touch of a small press. I know all of DAW's employees, and they know me. And since I know what each staff member does, I can go directly to them with a question or problem, which I have learned is also much more efficient and streamlined than the traditional method of doing every single thing through one's editor. When I want an ETA on a check, I call DAW's business manager. When I've got a production question, I call the production manager. And so on.

Moreover, DAW Books is the first publisher I've ever dealt with where it seems to be general *house culture* to treat the author as a valued professional partner in the publishing process. I've had the good fortune on various occasions to work with editors who treated me that way; but in many instances, others at the same house might well treat me like a diseased hooker. By contrast, not only is everyone at DAW always courteous and helpful when I contact them, but I've also found on multiple occasions that nobody there is just pushing paper or marking time; each employee I've dealt with there consistently exhibits a sense of investment in the house and its list.

Lest you think my experience is anomalous, this has long been DAW's reputation among many of its writers, which is precisely why I wanted for years to write for DAW. However, I was ineligible when I was a romance writer (DAW only publishes *sf/f*); and for reasons that will forever elude me, after I started writing fantasy, none of my literary agents was willing to send my work to DAW. Not even when I asked them to do so. Not even after DAW communicated to me its interest in getting me under contract. ▶

After I shed literary agents from my business model, the very first thing I did was submit a project to DAW. Within three weeks, I had a very good offer ... and I have been very happy there ever since, as DAW steadily continues living up to its positive reputation among my DAW-writer friends (some of whom have been there for many years).

Finding myself treated as a respected professional partner rather than (at best) a necessary evil, seeing my work treated as a valuable commodity rather than “hole filler” for the schedule, and seeing good intentions carried out capably so that my books are published well ... is all very new to me.

Indeed, I am so *unaccustomed* to this scenario that I continue to be constantly surprised by it. Such professional and courteous treatment, as well as this publisher’s consistent effort to administer our mutual business capably and to publish my books well is so unfamiliar to me that I keep having anxiety attacks—precisely because I’m not used to this! It feels *surreal*. (A close friend who knows how I am usually treated by publishers has suggested that I have a form of post-traumatic stress disorder; based on twenty years of previous experience in our industry, I keep flinching in expectation of a blow which, at this house, never actually comes.)

Of course, even this exceptional house isn’t flawless or without quirks. Then again, neither am I. They evidently find themselves able to deal with my foibles and vice versa.

Discovering for the first time that I can (with the right house) have a good relationship with a *publisher*, I feel like a stranger in a strange land, newly innocent again after all these years. And having wandered in the wilderness for the first two decades of my writing career, I am glad at long last to find myself in a land where I’d like to settle down, build a home, and stay a long, long time.

*Laura Resnick’s newest DAW book is Vamparazzi, which was preceded by her DAW releases Unsympathetic Magic and Doppelgangster.*

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## Business Briefs

### **Publisher as Distributor...Only**

After selling more than one million digital copies of his books in the Kindle store, self-published author John Locke is signing with Simon & Schuster. S&S isn’t publishing his books, though; they are going to distribute his books to the retail market beginning February 2012. The publisher says this is like working with a small publisher.

*PW Daily*

### **Booktour.com closes**

Booktour.com, the site that promoted author events (signings, readings, etc.), stopped operation on September 1. The recession was part of the reason, but the publishers not providing competitive events to draw the public was a big factor. Alternate sites such as Author Central, Google Calendar, Upcoming.org, and Eventful.com were mentioned for answering the same purpose.

*PW Daily*

### **New Teen Imprint from Albert Whitman**

Children’s books publisher Albert Whitman launched Albert Whitman Teen in July. The initial titles were the contemporary *Guantanamo Boy* by Anna Perera and Michael Ford’s Victorian ghost story, *The Poisoned House*. Both are UK imports. The spring releases will be Anna Perera’s *The Glass Collector* (another UK import) and *The Lifeguard* by Deborah Blumenthal.

The publisher intends to continue with issue-oriented selections.

*Library Journal*

### **How to Make a \$5 Book Trailer**

Do you want a book trailer but don’t want to shell out a lot of clams? Stroll over to historical romance author Kate Noble’s blog and find out how she made her own book trailer for \$5. Yes, five dollars.

<http://katenoble.com/blog/2011/05/how-to-make-a-book-trailer-for-5/>

# NINC Bulletin Board

COMPILED BY SUSAN LYONS

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

## Upcoming Conferences:

**2011 Write Angles Writer's Conference**, October 22, Willits-Hallowell Center at Mount Holyoke College, MA.

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

**North Carolina Writers' Network 2011 Fall Conference**, November 18-20, Asheville, NC.

[www.ncwriters.org/](http://www.ncwriters.org/)

**Creative Getaway for Writers**, January 13-16, 2012, Marconi Conference Center, Marshall, CA.

[www.carytennis.com/retreats.html](http://www.carytennis.com/retreats.html)

**Eighth Annual Eckerd College Writers' Conference: Writers in Paradise**, January 14-22, 2012, Boca Ciega Bay, St. Petersburg, FL.

<http://www.writersinparadise.com>

**Writers Studio at UCLA Extension**, February 9-12, 2012, Los Angeles, CA:

<http://www.uclaextension.edu/writers>.

**7th Annual San Miguel Writers' Conference & Literary Festival**, featuring Margaret Atwood and Naomi Wolf, February 16-19, 2012 plus optional 2-day Intensive Workshops, February 20-21. San Miguel, Mexico.

[www.sanmiguelwritersconference.org](http://www.sanmiguelwritersconference.org).

**2012 San Francisco Writers Conference**, February 16-20, 2012, at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, San Francisco, CA. <http://www.SFWriters.org>

**Unicorn Writers' Conference**, April 28, 2012, Portland, CT.

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

## JOT (Just One Thing) Volunteers Needed

### Bulletin Board Editor

Your Bulletin Board editor has to resign. If you're interested in volunteering, here's what's involved: Each month the editor prepares the Bulletin Board and submits it to the newsletter editor. The Bulletin Board editor checks with various committee heads to see if they have content they wish included, and prepares additional content. Content includes notices to members, vacant volunteer positions, highlights of features on the NINC website, and information about events etc. sponsored by other writing organizations that may be of interest to NINC members. Content does not include member news about new sales, contest wins, etc.

### NINC Website Reference Page

NINC also needs a new volunteer to maintain the Reference page on our website. Approximately four times a year, this person checks existing links, adds useful links, and checks for updates with Sally Hawkes (who is responsible for her Historical Corner page) and with Linnea Sinclair (who is responsible for the Free Software page). She/he provides the update to the webmistress.

### Adventures on the NINC Website

Want to write a character who's a motorcycle expedition guide, and you need to know more about the job? Or, how to cook in the great outdoors? Men's ideas of great cheap dates? How short men

can dress to look taller? The worst products ever invented for men (hint: many relate to hair loss or below-the-belt issues). For everything you ever wanted to know about manly men, visit The Art of Manliness (<http://artofmanliness.com/>). It's one of the many informative—and entertaining!—resources listed on the members-only Reference page on the NINC website.

What type of gun can you hide in a bra? Now, that's critical information for those of us who write cop and PI heroines. Where can you find the answer? On the Weapons\_Info YahooGroups chat loop. Find the link on the Reference/Research page (Reference tab of the Members Only section of our website) under the heading "Mystery/Suspense/Thriller."

## NINC Online

### NINC's Blog

NINC's blog is a large part of our online presence and a great way to promote your work. 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.

<http://www.facebook.com/novelists.inc>

Since most things are transitory and unintended consequences can morph into other unintended consequences and corrections, the chances are that authors, publishers, Internet innovators, or various consultants and deep thinkers will find a way to create “differentiation” methods so that readers can find their most meaningful personal reading choices, I am forever optimistic.

For those authors who see this essay as portending gloom and doom, take heart. At the very least, the serious author of imaginative fiction will no longer have to see his or her work live a life of perpetual exile in a computer file or in the bottom drawer of his or her home desk.

*Warren Adler is the author of 32 novels and short story collections published in numerous languages. Films adapted from his books include *The War of the Roses*, *Random Hearts*, and the PBS trilogy “*The Sunset Gang*.” He is a pioneer in digital publishing. For more information visit Warren’s website at [www.warrenadler.com](http://www.warrenadler.com) or follow him on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/warrenadler](http://www.twitter.com/warrenadler). This article first appeared on The Huffington Post on August 21, 2011. It is reprinted with the permission of the author.*

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**41 OVER 40** Continued from page 13 ▶

**Randy Susan Meyers:** My book, *The Murderer’s Daughter*, came out this year [2010]. I wrote it at 57.

**Sue Monk Kidd:** *The Secret Life Of Bees* debuted at 54.

**Annie Proulx:** Her first novel, *Postcards*, was published when she was 57.

**Jeanne Ray:** Her published debut, *Julie And Romeo*, came out in her 50s.

**George Eliot:** She was 50 when *Adam Bede* was published.

**Isak Dinesen:** Her first novel, *Seven Gothic Tales*, came out when she turned 50.

**Hallie Ephron:** The author of *Never Tell A Lie* started publishing fiction after 50.

**Jacquelyn Mitchard:** She was past 50 when *The Deep End Of The Ocean* debuted.

**Richard Adams:** *Watership Down* debuted when he was 52.

**Laura Ingalls Wilder:** Her first novel, beginning the *Little House* series, came out when she was 65.

**Harriet Doerr:** She won the National Book Award for *Stones For Ibarra*, which she wrote at 74.

**Katherine Anne Porter:** She published her only novel, *Ship Of Fools*, at age 72.

**EJ Knapp:** Debuted *Stealing The Marbles* this year [2010].

**Norman MacLean:** He wrote *A River Runs Through It* at age 74.

*Randy Susan Meyers is the author of *The Murderer’s Daughters* (St. Martin’s Press, 2010). Her family drama is informed by her work with batterers and victims of domestic violence, as well her experience with youth impacted by street violence. The book was a finalist for the Massachusetts Book Award. Her next novel, *Paper Baby*, will be released by Atria/Simon & Schuster in January 2013. Her website is <http://randysusanmeyers.com/> This blog post first appeared in The Huffington Post on September 11, 2010 and is reprinted with the author’s permission.*