

NINK

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Your Literary Legacy – Part Two: Toss, Store, or Donate

BY SANDRA KITT

Have you ever wondered what to do with all of your career papers, books, and stuff? In last month's *Nink*, we considered options for the stockpile of author copies you might have. This month, we will turn our attention to the other aspect of downsizing that many of us have either not considered or hoped would just go away. That is, how to manage the accumulated papers of a 30-year writing career.

This did not become a problem until I moved from a three-story, 13½-room house with complete basement, attic, and detached garage, to a co-op apartment of 950 square feet. Go ahead. Try to imagine just how much space that really is. Not enough, if you're also housing boxes of books that are contract copies, foreign editions, large print editions, digests, research notes, manuscripts in various stages of revisions and edits, galleys, ARCs (remember those?), and reissues. What about PR notices, press releases, promotion and marketing items, interviews, profiles, articles, and workshop handouts? And don't forget contracts, royalty statements, correspondence, and rejection letters. Have I left anything out? Yes, quite a lot. But you get the idea.

A year ago, I realized that it was simply not possible for me to keep everything for posterity, nor did I want to. I had reached a point when downsizing had become an active sports category. But before chucking everything, I thought carefully about what to keep, to store or store again at a new location, and what to donate. I recalled that a number of people over the past decades had written their PhD dissertations on women's and genre fiction; I'd been interviewed a number of times for such efforts. It was a reminder, as well, that perhaps I had contributed something of significance to an industry I'd been part of through 40+ published works of fiction. Certainly as an African American, I had done more than my share of "firsts." I had a

place in the history of women's fiction and romance.

I've dealt with the extra copies of books in the manner outlined in Part I of this series of articles. Now, the former librarian in me kicked into action to help out the panicked writer (and unwitting hoarder) with what to do with everything else.

Colleges and Universities — Start by contacting the library of your alma mater! Many large libraries have archival manuscript collections, and we've read often enough of this author or that whose life's work has been

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Novelists, Inc.

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Address changes may be made on the
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Members without Internet access may
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:

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*

Proprietary
Information

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.

Work in Progress = Progress



Meredith Efken

Half the year has already flown by! I wanted to give everyone an update on some of the exciting things we've been working on so far this year.

First, we're very happy to introduce to you the board's new administrative assistant, Terese Daly Ramin. We interviewed several amazing candidates, and it was such a hard choice, but we loved Terese's rich history with NINC and her experience on the RWA board of directors, as well as her experience freelance editing and work with Entangled Publishing. Terese began in May, and we're already wondering how we ever survived without her. With Terese's help, your board will be more effective and efficient. So when you see her, make sure to tell her thank you!

Second, as you probably already know, we experienced record-smashing registration numbers for the 2014 conference. The response to our return to the Tradewinds resort in St. Pete's Beach, FL, was so overwhelming that we had to take the unprecedented step at the end of May of closing registration four months early to avoid maxing out our meeting space. If you've been reading the reports of our chair, Kasey Michaels, you'll have a good idea of the wonderful lineup of workshops, panels, and speakers that we have for attendees. If you are not able to attend this year, rest assured that the newsletter has a team of conference reporters lined up to bring you first-hand reports throughout next year. We are also already working on making sure that in 2015 we have plans to handle larger registration numbers. We want everyone to be able to come.

As brilliant as we all think Kasey and her team are, a lot of the credit for this year's registration success is due to you—all of our members. You have talked up the conference and NINC to your writer friends, you have invited them to be part of NINC and to come to the conference. Your enthusiasm and support is a key reason why we have been able to make the conference the draw that it has become. This achievement belongs to all of us, and on behalf of the board and conference committee, we thank each of you for making it possible.

Third, NINC member Sally Hawkes is hard at work planning our Celebrate Popular Fiction Week, September 14–20. You've been reading about it in the newsletter, and if you haven't already signed up to participate, now is your chance. Contact Sally at sally@library.arkansas.gov. Sally is our 25th Anniversary Committee chair, and she is an excellent example of the kind of enthusiasm and willingness to get involved that makes our NINC members so gosh darn terrific.

And finally, the board is thrilled to announce that we've chosen a website company to redesign the NINC website and all the connecting systems behind the scenes. We want to introduce you to DitDat, owned by NINC members John Olson and Randy Ingermanson. DitDat is a fairly new company, but it is built on existing software designed by John Olson for non-profit groups just like ours.

The board investigated several companies, including ones that work with other writers organizations such as RWA and Sisters In Crime. We saw a lot of really amazing technology and met very creative, helpful people. What impressed us most about DitDat is that it is so incredibly easy to use. Additionally, John and Randy—being authors and NINC members themselves—really understand the particular needs of our organization and have gone extra lengths to meet those needs.

The new site will be very smooth and easy to navigate. We will continue to have great content available to you, but now it will be much easier to find. Additionally, all of our members will be able to interact more with the site and with each other through the site. ▶

For those of you who do not like technology, you will find that the new system will be much more user friendly for you. And if you do like technology, it's going to be a lot of fun for you to play with. For our visitors, it will send a clear message that NINC really is a cutting-edge, innovative group of professional novelists, and it will make joining our group straightforward and attractive.

This summer, we are working on the redesign process. You won't see any of that work on the current website and should not be affected by it at all until we launch the new system later in the year. We will send out special email announcements as needed to communicate with you all about the project.

What is important to know for now is that we are working closely with DitDat to plan for as smooth a transition as possible. As we get closer to launching the new site, we'll let you know what will happen and what to expect. Once you see the new system in action, we're pretty sure you'll be as excited as we are about it. So keep an eye on your email for further announcements!

We are also forming a brand new technology committee, chaired by our interim webmaster, Aaron Brown. The technology committee will provide basic tech support for all of you for the NINC website as well as some training and working with the content of the site.

We would love for you to be involved. You don't have to be a software engineer! That's what John is there for. Check out the announcement in this month's newsletter for more details of what we are looking for, and please consider being part of this new team.

I think that's it—for now. I promised you all a busy year, and our board and volunteers have been hard at work to meet that promise. And we still have six months to go. I am so proud of everyone—NINC members really are the best.

— *Meredith Efken*
President

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.

Business Briefs

Compiled by Sally Hawkes

Amazon & Hachette

The battle between the e-seller and book publisher was a prime topic at BookExpo America since Amazon states there won't be a resolution soon. The numbers that came from the Codex Group's March research are very interesting. Amazon has 41 percent of the new book unit purchases, controlling 65 percent of all online new book units in all formats. In addition, Amazon had 64 percent of the online print book sales. Online companies had 41 percent of book purchases last year, and bookstore chains had 22 percent. Although brick-and-mortar sites sell more books than e-sellers, the gap is closing.

Amazon's May 27 statement on Hachette:

http://www.amazon.com/forum/kindle/ref=cm_cd_tfp_ef_tft_tp?encoding=UTF8&cdForum=FxID7SY3BVSESG&cdThread=TxIUO5T446WM5YY

PW Daily

Announcing NINC's New Technology Committee

Do you like helping people with computer questions? Do you like explaining how to do things online? Are you good at writing clear, compelling website copy? Do you enjoy working with SEO? Do you like a website page with an appealing lay-out?

If you can say “yes” to any of those questions, NINC’s new Technology Committee is for you! We are looking for NINC members to help with the following:

- ▶ Answer questions from other NINC members about the website or other NINC-related technology—most of it will be through email, but sometimes it might be easier just to pick up the phone and talk.
- ▶ Teach NINC volunteers and members how to do stuff on the new website (don’t worry—we’ll train you first!)
- ▶ Keep an eye on the content of the website and make sure it is up to date and fits with our content and style guidelines.
- ▶ Help NINC members and volunteers do things on the new site if they need help
- ▶ Create new content and web page copy
- ▶ Help improve SEO
- ▶ Help shape and direct the look and user experience of the website

Note what’s NOT on that list: computer programming, rocket science, engineering ... though we know some of you can do all that, too! But what we really need are people who like to help out others, are reasonably patient, and can talk people through, step by step, how to use the new site.

You also don’t have to be good at ALL those things on the above list. If you aren’t good at answering questions but you can write great website copy—we would love to have you be on the committee. And vice versa.

Aaron Brown is the chair of this new technology committee, and we’ve given him all the hard stuff to handle. He’s been a CTO at a start-up and now is the marketing manager for Lou Aronica at The Story Plant—so you know he’s basically indestructible. So you’d be working with him and a great team of other NINC members. And the more people we have helping out, the less work for each person—our goal is to keep it manageable so you can have the fun of being more involved with NINC and still do the stuff that got you into NINC to begin with (i.e., write more books)!

Sound like fun? Then contact Aaron Brown at abrown@ninc.com and let him know that you’d like to be considered for the technology committee. Give him an idea of what your interests and skills are, and he will be in touch.

— Meredith Efken

Your Literary Legacy, Part Two

Continued from page 1 ▶

given to their college. Of course it helps if you're famous, but just being well published in a subject that no one else has cornered can be your way in.

State Library — Every state has a library devoted to materials, artifacts, books, manuscripts of citizens of that state, most particularly if the subject of your work centers around that state. Your local public librarian can help you track down an address.

Browne Popular Culture Library at Bowling Green — This collection has been around for more than 15 years. They still accept author collections, but have more specific guidelines. Library Director Nancy Brown (no relation) says to contact her about what you wish to donate and she will assess your papers suitability for the Browne Library collection. <http://www2.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/pcl/>

American Academy of Arts and Letters — This organization seems to be more literary-minded, but you should read up on their history and mission and check out some of their past winners. Alice Waters and Sherman Alexie are recent inductees! <http://www.artsandletters.org/about.php>

Society of American Archivists — No, they do not want your stuff, but they can give additional guidance as to what's considered desirable materials to donate, and they can offer other options and venues for those donations. <http://www2.archivists.org/about>

In all cases, this is the expected list of desirable materials from a published author:

- ▶ Corrected or uncorrected original manuscripts, drafts, and final copies
- ▶ Research notes, files, reference materials (if esoteric and not readily available in a library)
- ▶ Letters—editors, publishers, fans, etc.
- ▶ Reviews
- ▶ Articles (profiles) about the author
- ▶ Galley proofs, copy edits, ARCS (may be kept to show publication process)
- ▶ Published books (first editions are nice)
- ▶ Foreign language translations
- ▶ Audio books
- ▶ Publicity
- ▶ Speeches and lectures
- ▶ Photographs (labeled)
- ▶ Films/videos/audio tapes (labeled)
- ▶ Awards
- ▶ *Highly desirable*: anything that shows a writer's creative process and how a book gets written, how research is done, how a story was written and changed during the process; what is the process? Also, how an author engaged in the publishing process, how media and/or fans reacted to the work. These are what a researcher or scholar would want to know about.
- ▶ Some authors include notes explaining how something in the process of writing a book came to be; i.e., where the title came from, fan letters that contribute to development of a story, etc.
- ▶ Different types of publishing options include: traditional, small houses, self-publishing, e-publishing, works done in different genres.

NOTE: Widely circulated materials like newspapers, magazines, and books are not considered archival unless they are annotated by the donor in some way.

Do not try to sort your entire collection. This is a process better left to professional archivists, who will discuss the process with you. As a general rule, individuals should consider weeding their own materials, disposing of duplicate copies, old cancelled checks, and other materials not suitable for donation. When materials exist on electronic media they should be printed out. This goes for information on CDs and flash drives as well. You can retain the floppy disks and other electronic media and donate them, but do so with the knowledge that the information on the disks may not ever be accessible.

There is a third component to all the considerations above, and that is to keep all your papers. There's a professional and durable way to accomplish this as well. That would be a Part Three article, if anyone is interested in the subject of protecting and conserving your papers the archival way.

Sandra Kitt has published 40 novels, including Fearless Love, her current release from Open Road Media, as well as The Color of Love, Significant Others, and Close Encounters. She is the recipient of RWA and Romantic Times Lifetime Achievement Awards, and the Zora Neale Hurston Literary Award. She is also the former managing director of the Richard S. Perkin Collection in Astronomy and Astrophysics at the American Museum of Natural History.

Business Briefs

New Logos for Penguin Random House



Penguin Random House recently revealed its new logo, which will be paired with those of its 250 brands, divisions, and imprints. The logo was developed with the help of Pentagram, a New York City design agency.

PW Daily

Macmillan's Flatiron Books Add Fiction

Amy Einhorn's move from Penguin Random House (where she had her own imprint) to Macmillan has prompted a change in that publisher's plans for Flatiron Books. That imprint previously was to publish only nonfiction. Einhorn will start on July 21 and will be responsible for fiction acquisitions. No release dates have been announced, but there are expected to be three books per month. Einhorn previously worked at Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, Poseidon Press, and Grand Central. Titles published included Liane Moriarity's *The Husband's Secret*, Kathryn Stockett's *The Help*, and Jenny Lawson's *Let's Pretend This Never Happened*.

PW Daily

To Succeed as an Author, Get Your ASK Out There!

BY BOB BAKER

This title may seem like a joke, but if you truly embrace the idea I share here, it could seriously transform your life and career as an author.

Do you ever get frustrated by slow progress? Are you cynical because few people seem to give a damn about you and your book? Do you find yourself praying for a big break? (Heck, you'd probably settle for a modest break or even a break crumb at this point.)

Here's one solution:

Maybe you just need to get your ASK out there more often.

A writer friend was recently expressing frustration over the lack of financial support she was getting. "I'm following my passion and doing good work in the world, but very little money and attention are coming my way," she moaned.

Can you relate?

After chatting for a while, I discovered she really hadn't put structures and offers in place that would allow enough people to send money her way. And most important, she wasn't ASKing people to benefit from the books and message she delivered. She was putting good stuff out into the world, but she was relying on people to figure out for themselves what to do with it. She was waiting for them to come to her. And, as a result, they were slow to respond.

Here's the reality ...

People are busy ... and distracted ... and overwhelmed ... and ... *oh look, is that a squirrel?* As much as you'd like to think your friends and fans will step up to the plate and support you on their own, most of them will require a nudge. That means you must get in the habit of regularly ASKing people to do something.

Want more book sales? Create special offers and ASK your fans to make a purchase. And not just once, ASK two or three times during any given book promotion.

Want more raving reviews? ASK people to rate and review your book on Amazon and other book sites. And make it easy for them by giving them the direct link to your book's Amazon page.

Want more public speaking gigs? ASK more associations, meet-up groups, and schools if they could benefit from your topic. And follow up when you don't hear back after the first request. Also ASK your readers and fans for suggestions on speaking opportunities.

Want more people at your live events? ASK your fans to come. And do it more than once, in all sorts of ways—by email, on Facebook and Twitter, in person, at the previous event, etc.

Want to create more buzz about your book? Well, the best way to inspire word-of-mouth is to create a remarkable book. Beyond that, ASK people to share, retweet, pin, and forward your links. ASK them to recommend it to their friends or give a copy as a gift.

Of course, you must also learn the art of *how* to ASK. It can't be in a self-serving way. You must always position your request in terms of how it benefits the other person. But one thing I know for sure: The more you ASK for the things you desire (in a helpful, value-added manner), the more you will get!

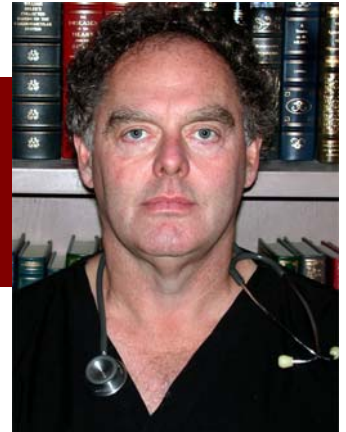
Sure, some people will tell you "No." Many will ignore you. But a surprising number may start to say "yes" and actually give you what you ask for! But you won't get to this radiant state of receiving until you ask more often.

Here's your new book career mantra: ASK, ASK, ASK, ASK, ASK! Got it? Good! Now get your ASK out there!

Bob Baker is president of the St. Louis Publishers Association and the author of "55 Ways to Promote and Sell Your Book on the Internet." He offers marketing tips and services through the websites www.FullTimeAuthor.com and www.thebuzzfactor.com. This article previously appeared on The Book Designer blog and is reprinted with the author's permission.

Forensic Files

By D. P. Lyle, MD



Will a Decaying Corpse Actually Produce Alcohol?

Q: Is possible or likely for blood alcohol levels to increase or decrease in a decomposing body, and if so during what stages of decomposition?

A: Alcohol is usually consumed in the decay process but may actually be produced and this might cloud any toxicological examinations on the corpse, make it look as if the victim consumed more alcohol than he actually did.

I must point out that alcohol is not commonly produced, but it does happen in rare cases. The alcohol is a byproduct of the action of some types of bacteria that are involved in the decay process. This means that alcohol can only appear during active decay. What is that time period? A little about putrefaction: The decomposition of the human body involves two distinct processes, autolysis and putrefaction.

Autolysis is basically a process of self-digestion. After death, the enzymes within the body's cells begin the chemical breakdown of the cells and tissues. As with most chemical reactions, the process is hastened by heat and slowed by cold.

Putrefaction is the bacterially mediated destruction of the body's tissues. It is this decay that might cause some alcohol formation. Not always, but sometimes. The responsible bacteria mostly come from the intestinal tract of the deceased, though environmental bacteria and yeasts contribute in many situations. Bacteria thrive in warm, moist environments and become sluggish in colder climates. Freezing will stop their activities completely. A frozen body will not undergo putrefaction until it thaws.

Under normal temperate conditions, putrefaction follows a known sequence. During the first 24 hours, the abdomen takes on a greenish discoloration, which spreads to the neck, shoulders, and head. Bloating follows. This is due to the accumulation of gas, a byproduct of the action of bacteria, within the body's cavities and skin. This swelling begins in the face where the features swell and the eyes and tongue protrude. The skin will then begin to "marble." This is a web-like pattern of the blood vessels over the face, chest, abdomen, and extremities. This pattern is green-black in color and is due to the reaction of the blood's hemoglobin with hydrogen sulfide. As gases continue to accumulate, the abdomen swells and the skin begins

Forensic Files

to blister. Soon, skin and hair slippage occur and the fingernails begin to slough off. By this stage, the body has taken on a greenish-black color. The fluids of decomposition (purge fluid) will begin to drain from nose and mouth. This may look like bleeding from trauma, but is due to extensive breakdown of the body's tissues.

The rate at which this process occurs is almost never “normal” because conditions surrounding the body are almost never “normal.” Both environmental and internal body conditions alter this process greatly. Obesity, excess clothing, a hot and humid environment, and the presence of sepsis may speed this process so that 24 hours appear like five or six days have passed. Sepsis is particularly destructive to the body. Not only would the body temperature be higher at death, but also the septic process would have spread bacteria throughout the body. In this case, the decay process would begin quickly and in a widespread fashion. A septic body that is dead for only a few hours may appear as if it has been dead for several days.

As opposed to the above situations, a thin, unclothed corpse lying on a cold surface with a cool breeze would follow a much slower decomposition process. Very cold climes may slow the process so much that even after several months, the body appears as if it has been dead only a day or two. Freezing will protect the body from putrefaction if the body is frozen before the process begins. Once putrefaction sets in, even freezing the body may not prevent its eventual decay. If frozen quickly enough, the body may be preserved for years.

So, whether a particular corpse actually produces alcohol or not is totally unpredictable. How long it takes depends upon the conditions the corpse is exposed to. In a corpse in an enclosed garage in Houston in August, this process will be very rapid, and the corpse will be severely decayed after 48 hours. If parked in a snow bank in Minnesota in February it might not even begin the decay process until April or May when the spring thaw occurs. And anything in between. The appearance of any alcohol would coincide with the time frame of the bacterial activity.

So how does the ME get around this possibility? How can he determine the actual alcohol level that was present prior to the decay process kicking in? He can't with any absolute accuracy, but he does have a tool that will help him make a best guess. He can extract the vitreous humor from the victim's eye—this is the jelly-like fluid that fills the eyeballs. The alcohol level within this fluid matches that of the blood with about a two-hour delay. That is, the level within the vitreous at any given time reflects the blood alcohol level that was present approximately two hours earlier. And the vitreous is slow to decay, so it might be intact even though the corpse is severely decayed. By measuring the vitreous level, the ME will know the blood alcohol level two hours prior to death, and he can then estimate the blood alcohol level at the time of death.

D. P. Lyle, MD

For more of the nitty-gritty of character details, read/listen at:

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

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

Crime and Science Radio:

http://www.dplylemd.com/DPLyleMD/Crime_%26_Science_Radio.html

What Are The Toxic Effects of a Poisonous Octopus Bite?

Q: If a healthy adult male, late 40s, were to be bitten on the palm of his hand by an Australian blue-ringed octopus (*octopus maculosus*), how long would it take for him to die? What would be the progression of symptoms? Assuming the forensic pathologist was unaware of the role of the octopus in the death, to what would he or she likely attribute the death?

A: The Blue-Ringed Octopus comes in two distinct species. The larger, *Hapalochlaena lunulata*, is approximately eight inches across, while the smaller, the *Hapalochlaena maculosa*, measures only a few inches across and weighs one ounce. The Blue-Ringed Octopus is one of the most deadly creatures in the sea. Small, dark brown to dark yellow in color, it has blue rings, which “glow” a brilliant electric blue when it is angered or disturbed. It hangs out in Australia and the Indo-Pacific area. Typically found in shallow waters and along beaches, it bites when disturbed or picked up by the unsuspecting victim.

The toxin, tetrodotoxin (TTX) is a neurotoxin. It is also found in the Puffer Fish, the California newt (*genus Taricha*), and in the harlequin frogs (*genus Atelopus*) of Central America. In the Caribbean, TTX is used as Zombie Powder and in some voodoo rituals. A single Blue-ring may possess enough toxin to kill ten adult humans.

Envenomation typically occurs when the animal bites the victim, but prolonged contact with the saliva of the Blue-ring may allow passage of the toxin through the skin.

The toxic effects are dependent upon how much venom is transferred and the size and health status of the victim. Symptoms onset quickly, usually within minutes, and progress rapidly. Most are of a neurological nature, since TTX attacks the nerves. The symptoms include numbness, paresthesias (tingling), muscular weakness, blurred vision, nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, slurred speech, poor coordination, loss of consciousness, and death. TTX may lead to very low blood pressure, shallow breathing, a very weak pulse, and dilated (enlarged) pupils so that the victim may appear dead before death truly sets in. If the victim survives, he may suffer brain damage from the low blood pressure and reduced breathing. This combination of effects reduces the amount of oxygen in the blood (called hypoxemia) and the amount of blood that reaches the brain. The result is anoxic encephalopathy, which is literally brain damage due to poor oxygenation.

In zombie making (yes, this does happen), TTX is ingested or absorbed through the skin, leads to anoxic encephalopathy as described above, and results in a very compliant individual. It is like a chemical frontal lobotomy.

There is no antitoxin available. Treatment consists of controlling the low blood pressure and supporting breathing until the toxin wears off. This may take hours. CPR should be started immediately to improve blood circulation and supply oxygen to the blood stream. The victim should be immediately transported to the hospital where he would be placed on a ventilator and medications to increase the

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Celebrating the Best of NINC

Tradewinds Hotel, St. Pete, FL
October 22-26, 2014

Keynote Speaker Announced ... and more!

Journalist Porter Anderson, who will be acting as moderator for First Word panels, has graciously consented to be Keynote Speaker at our NINC sponsored lunch that same day.

Although he tailors his speech to suit what is most current in our business today, he has recently given the speech to high praise in Sweden.

Here's a glowing summary of Porter's presentation at The Next Chapter conference in Stockholm just last month, as reported in *The Bookseller* in London. A good site to bookmark, by the way:

<http://www.thebookseller.com/>

... and, yes, I kept their English spellings.

Porter Anderson reminded us of this [author power], in a virtuoso ... talk, dramatising the antagonism between elements of the indie author and publishing worlds in stark terms. What is clear is that authors have options as never before, and publishers are still formulating a coherent and appropriate response.

... as was underlined in Anderson's speech, one fundamental entity remains as mysterious as ever: readers. However much we analyse the data, pore over Nielsen surveys, and wander around bookshops, publishing is just too insanely segmented—and the media landscape too fast-moving and febrile—for us to have a firm handle on where readers are going and what they want.

And, as tweeted by one of his enthralled audience: “Porter Anderson just held the most emotional lecture I've ever seen and heard. And, it was about publishing!”

I love the title and blurb Porter gave me:

Not In My Name: A snapshot of what's happening in book publishing now ... And how does today's picture compare to the reasons we all got involved in the first place?

You can check out Porter's bio on the conference website—get ready to be impressed. The topper is, he's a great guy, both he and his Literary Beagle, Cooper, who will also be with us.



Registrations ... Waiting List

The conference is, as of press time, June 5, booked to the gills. However, there most certainly will be some openings before the conference, so if you wish to be put on the waiting list, email me at kcmi@aol.com.

Hashtag, Tweets, and Blogging

Our hashtag for the conference is #NINC2014. Feel free to tweet at any time, and most especially during the conference itself.

We will also be blogging during the conference. More on that later.

For those attending the conference and those contemplating it (and on the waiting list), here is an important address for you: beachninc2014-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. This gets you on the beachNINC2014 Yahoo loop, where you can network, search for a roommate, coordinate ground transportation, sign up for hostess meals, and, very importantly, register your spouse/companion for the meals of your choice, offered at cost. The menu and prices are there, you can sign up your guest for one, two, or all three, and we'll need the spouse/companion name for badges.

Thanks to You, the Place to Be

The tremendous response we're getting to our 25th Anniversary NINC Conference has admittedly taken everyone by surprise. We credit this early response to registration opening the day the current year's conference closes (we'll do the same this year), the caliber of our speakers, the general laid-back, welcoming atmosphere of the conference, and the growing positive reputation of NINC as the place for career novelists to be.

Thank you. Thank you all!

— Kasey Michaels
Chair

Forensic Files

Continued from page 11 ▶

blood pressure would be administered. Some common intravenous medication used for this are epinephrine, Dopamine, and Dobutamine.

If the victim were an adult and if the death took place at the beach or in the water, the ME might assume the victim died of a heart attack (myocardial infarction or MI) or a cardiac arrhythmia (change in the heart's rhythm) brought about by physical exertion. If the victim were older and died in bed or in any other resting situation, he might assume the same, particularly if the victim had a history of heart disease or if he found evidence of significant heart disease during the autopsy. Of course, if the victim is young and otherwise healthy, the ME would be more suspicious that the death was not natural but rather at the "hand of another."

At autopsy, the ME could rule out an MI but not an arrhythmia since there are no autopsy findings in deaths from such cardiac electrical instability. He would suspect poisoning only if the death appeared to be something other than a tragic event or if he located the bite mark, which he could with a diligent search. If the killer spread the octopus' saliva on the victim's skin or put it in some ingested food, then, of course, no bite mark would be present. If the ME ordered them, toxicological examinations would reveal the TTX.

The key would be to avoid an autopsy in the first place. If neither a post-mortem exam nor toxicological testing were done, the ME could sign out the death as natural. Political shenanigans, love triangle, bribes, or some other intrigue could entice the coroner to "miss" the critical clues and cover up the actual murder.

D. P. Lyle is the Macavity Award-winning and Edgar, Agatha, Scribe, and USA Today Best Book Award-nominated author of many nonfiction books as well as numerous fiction works, including the Samantha Cody and the Dub Walker thriller series, and the Royal Pains media tie-in novels. He has worked with many novelists and writers of popular television shows. Dr. Lyle is a practicing cardiologist in Orange County CA. See his website at www.dplylemd.com or his blog at <http://writersforensicsblog.wordpress.com>. These Q&As are republished with the author's permission.



Photo by Sabrina Ingram

Not Your Usual Writing Advice

By JoAnn Grote

Playing with Time

“People like us, who believe in physics, know that the distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion.”

— Albert Einstein

I once worked in a public accounting firm, where all the accountants were required to keep track of how they spent every six minutes. This is common practice in the public accounting world, and it’s also common for the constant awareness of passing time in that environment to create enormous stress. When I left accounting, I removed my watch and said I’d never wear one again.

Not feeling tied to a watch or clock gave me a wonderful sense of freedom at first, but time limitations remained in my life. After all, novelists are also under deadline stress, whether imposed by an editor or self-imposed; however, I don’t find the stress of writing deadlines as constant and debilitating as six-minute deadlines in the business world.

Some people find deadline stress helps them to focus and to work in a more efficient manner. I’ve sometimes used that premise when a book deadline loomed, and I set a goal to write at least 250 words every 15 minutes. That practice placed me right back in the stress-filled accounting firm mindset, but it worked. I didn’t find the experience as depressing as at the accounting firm, as I knew I could change the plan after a few hours or days.

Some novelists create this type of deadline stress on a regular basis, whether just between themselves and the clock, or with fellow writers in a competition to see who can get the most words on the screen in a limited amount of time.

Sometimes writers procrastinate, subconsciously setting themselves up for the adrenaline rush of writing within a tightened deadline.

I used conferences as deadlines before I published. Many unpublished writers use contests as deadlines.

All of the above are ways of using time to focus our priorities and our mental and physical energy.

We get paid for the words we put on the screen or on paper, but we need time to play with our ideas, or we don’t know what words—whether specific to a scene or a complete story—to write. Sometimes this is the most difficult time to allow ourselves to create, since it looks so little like “work” to ourselves and others.

Deepak Chopra, a medical doctor who promotes mind/body spiritual healing, says that when we feel we don’t have enough time, we create the experience of “running out of time,” even to the point of death. I believe that can be true.

I also believe we can use time to feel more alive and more powerful in the creation of our own lives—with the emphasis on *feel*, since time may not exist at all.

Life often seems chaotic, and no wonder, if Einstein is correct in the theory expressed in the quote at the top of the article that there is no distinction between the past, present and future. I believe chaos is our nor-

mal state (some days are more “normal” than others) and not to be feared; but I believe our inclination to use time to create a sense of order within that chaos is also normal.

Chopra, whose above belief might depress one at first, also believes, “Life gives you plenty of time to do whatever you want to do, if you stay in the present moment.” My first reaction to that is, “That shouldn’t be hard to do if Einstein is right, because everything is happening in the present moment.” My more human response is, using time to help me focus might be a way to stay in the present moment more often.

I’m writing this in June, and one tends to believe it’s “summertime, and the living is easy,” or it should be easy. The word “vacation” looms large in our minds. Many of us daydream of time to lie in the sun, to go on picnics, or to wade in a lake or the ocean and dig our toes into the sand at a beach. A friend told me that the word vacation derives from the Latin word *vaccio*, which means freedom. In that sense, doing anything one enjoys, including writing a novel, can give the sense of vacation. It’s all in how we choose to use our time, and how we choose to view those choices.

I’m considering a new way of using time to create freedom in my life, which is how I wound up musing on time for this column. My life has been more chaotic (more normal) than usual since my mother’s fall and stint in the hospital last year, which had such a dramatic everyday impact on both our lives. I’ve been offered a full-time position as a technical writer and editor. This was not something I consciously created. I haven’t worked full time for anyone but myself for 22 years, though I have included technical writing in my self-employed writing world. Once I received the offer, I realized I might use a full-time position to strengthen my sense of order, that I might use time in that way to create more time to focus on my creative writing goals during this period in my life.

I think the effect of time on our lives is like so many other things: it’s all about the attitude we choose. Time is just a tool, or a toy, or both. If Einstein is right, everything is happening all at once anyway: sleeping, spending time with others, the day job, the arrival of a story idea, beginning to write the story, completing the writing of the story, the book’s arrival in print or e-book format.

Hmm. So the book I’m writing is already written. I wonder how I resolved that issue in Chapter Two around the discovery of the one-hundred-year-old murder?

JoAnn Grote is the award-winning author of 40 books, including inspirational romances, middle-grade historical novels, and children’s nonfiction. Contact her at jaghi@rconnect.com.

Business Briefs



little bee books

Bonnier Brings Bee Imprint

A new U.S. Imprint is coming from U.K.’s Bonnier for readers 0-12 years. The new line will be distributed by Simon & Schuster with early learning, board books, picture books, and nonfiction titles. Spring of 2015 will see 50 titles launched with a total of 150 in print by the end of 2015.

PW Daily

Books-A-Million has dedicated Hachette site

BAM moved a little (.2 percent) in the first quarter of 2014, and they may be working a new profitable venue. They announced at BEA there is a dedicated link on their web site for Hachette titles. They are also giving up to a 40 percent discount on a number of Hachette titles.

PW Daily



WRITING *is* TAXING

By Diane Kelly

It's Never Too Late

Seems April 15 comes earlier every year. If you're like me, you found yourself scrambling at the last minute this year, pounding energy drinks while you stayed up late, plugging numbers into tax forms. But what if you didn't quite manage to get your return filed on time? Worse, what if filing your taxes is still on your "to do" list?

If you managed to get an extension filed on or before April 15, good for you. Your return will not be treated as late unless you fail to file by the six-month extended due date (October 15). Note, however, that the return filing requirement is separate from the payment requirement. While the extension gives a taxpayer more time in which to file the tax return, it does not give the taxpayer additional time in which to pay the taxes owed.

You will owe no penalty or interest if you are due a refund on your tax return. *Phew!* If you owe taxes, however, it's important to note that the failure to file penalty is more than the failure to pay penalty. The IRS prefers that taxpayers go ahead and file their returns even if they can't pay the taxes due in full with the return. Thus, it's best to get returns filed ASAP even if you lack the funds to make an immediate payment.

The late filing penalty is generally 5 percent of the unpaid taxes for each month or partial month that the return is late. If you file your tax return more than 60 days after the due date, the minimum penalty is the lesser of \$135 or 10 percent of the unpaid tax. The maximum late filing penalty is 25 percent of the unpaid taxes.

The failure to pay penalty is 1/2 of 1 percent of the unpaid taxes for each month or partial month that the payment is late. The maximum late payment penalty is 25 percent of the unpaid taxes. The late payment penalty is not a substitute for interest. Interest will apply to late payments in addition to the penalty. The interest rate varies based on market conditions and is adjusted quarterly. For the first quarter of 2014, the interest rate was 3 percent. Be aware that no late payment penalty will apply if you paid in at least 90 percent of the current year's taxes by the original return due date. Interest will apply to the remaining balance until paid, however.

If you owe both the late filing and late payment penalties, the late filing penalty will be reduced by the late payment penalty, making the total penalty 5 percent per month or partial month. In other words, when both penalties apply, it's as if the late payment penalty is waived.

No penalties will be due if you can show the IRS that your failure to file or pay on time is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect. If you believe you have reasonable cause for your delay, attach an explanatory letter to your tax return. A mental or physical illness that incapacitates a taxpayer may be considered reasonable cause, but be aware that the bar is high. To get penalties waived, you must show that you exercised ordinary care and prudence, and were prevented from filing your return and/or paying your taxes by extraordinary circumstances.

If you can pay all of your income taxes due within 120 days of filing your tax return, you should call 1-800-829-1040 to make payment arrangements. Paying your taxes within this short time period will enable you to avoid the fee for setting up an Installment Agreement.

If you cannot make full payment within 120 days, you can file a Form 9465 Installment Agreement Request to set up a payment arrangement, or, if you owe no more than \$50,000, you can apply online for a payment agreement at <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Online-Payment-Agreement-Application>. The fee for setting up an Installment Agreement is \$120 unless you agree to a direct debit of your payments, in which case the fee is reduced to \$52. You are guaranteed to be approved for an Installment Agreement if you owe \$10,000 or less, you agree to pay the full amount due within three years, and you have timely filed all returns and timely paid all income tax in the last five years.

Note that Form 9465 should be used only for individual income taxes or employment taxes owed by an individual who is no longer operating a business. The form should not be used to request a payment plan for employment taxes owed by an ongoing business.

Given that penalties and interest are based on the amount owed, a taxpayer who is due a refund might feel no sense of urgency in filing their taxes. Nonetheless, these taxpayers should file their returns as soon as possible for several reasons. First, the statute of limitations during which the IRS can examine a return does not begin to run until a return is filed. The longer a taxpayer delays filing his or her return, the longer the time period the IRS has to audit that return. Second, the chances of being audited are greater the longer a taxpayer delays in filing a return. The IRS assumes taxpayers who fail to comply with filing deadlines might also be disregarding other tax rules. Why increase your risk of being audited? The sooner you can file the better. Finally, a taxpayer who delays filing their return too long could lose their right to the refund. A taxpayer has only three years from the date a return is due or two years after taxes are paid to claim a refund. Any refund not claimed during the requisite time period will be lost. Moreover, any such refund owed will generally not be credited toward later taxes owed. It's better to get the return filed and retain the right to a refund.

Diane Kelly is a retired CPA/tax attorney who writes humorous romantic mysteries, including the just-released Paw Enforcement K-9 cop series.

Business Briefs

Nebula Awards Announced



The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America has announced the winners of the 2013 Nebula Awards (presented in 2014), as well as the winners of the Ray Bradbury Award for Outstanding Dramatic Presentation and the Andre Norton Award for Young Adult Science Fiction and Fantasy.

Winners include:

Best Novel – *Ancillary Justice*, Anne Leckie (*Orbit US; Orbit UK*)

Best Novella – “The Weight of the Sunrise,” Vylar Kaftan (*Asimov’s 2/13*)

Best Novelette – “The Waiting Stars,” Aliette de Bodard (*The Other Half of the Sky*)

Best Short Story – “If You Were a Dinosaur, My Love” Rachel Swirsky (*Apex 3/13*)

The Ray Bradbury Award for Outstanding Dramatic Presentation went to *Gravity* (Alfonso Cuarón, director; Alfonso Cuarón & Jonás Cuarón, writers) (Warner Bros.).

The Andre Norton Award for Young Adult Science Fiction and Fantasy went to *Sister Mine* by Nalo Hopkinson (Grand Central).

swfa.org

The Mad Scribbler

By Laura Resnick



Whose Side Are You On?

“Their contracts are functionally identical. Their e-book royalties (and most others terms and clauses) are lockstep and are not negotiable. They have a history of working together in a noncompetitive fashion in order to raise prices for their customers.”

**— bestselling indie author Hugh Howey on the “Big 5” publishers,
May 31, 2014**

As you probably know, unless you spent May and June chained to the floor of an underwater cave, online retail giant Amazon and major publisher Hachette recently locked horns. (They may come to terms by the time this column is printed; but as of this writing, their public statements indicate that they’re still far from reaching an agreement.)

“Amazon Pushes Yet Another Publisher Around” was the headline of a *Slate Magazine* article on May 9, 2014. “For months now, Amazon has been trying to put the screws on Hachette,” the *New York Times* reported on May 16. “Amazon Escalates Standoff With Hachette,” *USA Today* proclaimed on May 23. A *Time* headline dated May 27 stated, “Amazon’s War On Hachette Is Vintage Jeff Bezos.” And so on.

As it happens, no one who actually *knows* what’s being negotiated has shared that knowledge. There has been a great deal of speculation and supposition in traditional and social media, but little information. The gist of it is that the two companies evidently encountered chasms of disagreement in negotiating a new distribution deal. These being two for-profit corporations, the areas of dispute are presumably money and profit margins, rather than morality, theology, love, honor, or national borders.

And despite the absence of actual information from either of the parties involved in this negotiation, there has been a great deal of passionate side-taking. Amazon has its vehement detractors (Hachette, the New York publishing establishment, many vocal Hachette authors, and quite a lot of the media) and its defenders (many vocal self-publishing writers, some small publishers). Predictably, Hachette’s defenders and detractors are the exact opposite of Amazon’s.

I, too, have passionately taken a side here. I am on *my* side. And I have yet to encounter a large business corporation that’s on anyone’s side but its own, so I haven’t looked for a champion in this situation, let alone a friend or a hero.

Amazon is perceived as playing hardball here, employing tactics such as slowing down fulfillment on customer orders for Hachette books, reducing warehousing of Hachette stock, removing pre-order buttons from upcoming Hachette releases, and no longer discounting (so that the buyer has to pay Hachette’s list price for a book rather than Amazon’s discounted price).

I recognize that these tactics are tough on Hachette, but since the company is neither my champion nor my friend, my concern is strictly for its authors. For example:

Do any Hachette authors know the points of disagreement in these negotiations? (As far as I can tell, no.) Has Hachette asked or accepted the authors' input on these negotiations, which are now affecting the authors' sales? Is Hachette holding out for terms that will directly benefit its authors—or just for terms that will benefit Hachette?

From my perspective, the authors appear to be children caught up in the divorce battle of raging narcissists; their fate is being decided by two entities that don't care about them and aren't consulting them.

It also seems a foregone conclusion that Amazon will win this dispute, precisely because the retailer is estimated by *Publishers Weekly* to control more than 60 percent of the online book market and more than 40 percent of the overall book market. That makes it a market that the Big 5 (Hachette, Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, MacMillan, and Random Penguin) can't afford *not* to do business with, even if they hate the terms on the table.

And, boy, do I know how *that* feels!

I know because I spent more than 20 years of my full-time, self-supporting writing career in the precisely the same dilemma: I was in a terrible negotiating position for every book deal I made because my only choice, realistically, was always “take it or leave it.”

Due to the way that production and distribution of books functioned until quite recently, a book contract with one of the major houses was just about the only feasible way for a commercial fiction writer to reach readers and earn income with a novel. And the major houses knew it—which put them, when dealing with writers, in precisely the sort of negotiating position that Amazon is currently in.

Five of the major houses were so unhappy about being in a weak negotiating position with Amazon that their grand solution was a collusive price-fixing scheme which was a colossal failure that has cost them each tens of millions of dollars. And now those spoilsports at the Department of Justice insist the Big 5 must operate within the confines of federal law—a restriction which has upset various bloggers, organizations, and pundits.

The market-dominance that major publishers had in negotiations with writers cemented what we know as “industry standard” clauses, a situation where each publisher's contracts were virtually indistinguishable from the others'. And because of the lock that publishers had on book production and distribution (realistically, how were you going to get 50,000 copies of your novel produced and distributed without them?), none of the publishers needed to compete with each other by improving terms or innovating the way they dealt with writers.

Yes, if there was a writer or a book that more than one of them *really* wanted, they'd negotiate on the advance certainly, and even on some of the contract terms. But for the vast majority of writers, even if the advance was negotiable (and often it was presented on a take-it-or-leave-it basis), key contract terms were *not* negotiable.

And they are *still* not negotiable. Several years into the digital revolution and the rise of a huge self-publishing industry, the major houses still aren't negotiating on royalty rates, reserves against returns, or reversion clauses. According to Hugh Howey, who famously got a print-only deal with Simon & Schuster in 2012, the major houses will no longer negotiate print-only deals. I've talked with a number of writers whose publishers have refused to negotiate the non-compete clause. The HarperCollins lawsuit against Open Road Media, which I wrote about in my May column, originated in HarperCollins' refusal to negotiate digital royalty rates.

Non-negotiation is an ingrained habit for publishers when dealing with writers, because prior to the self-publishing revolution, none of the publishers *needed* to break ranks with “industry standard” to attract or keep writers. Their mail piles were so huge that submissions from multi-published award-winning writers sat (and *still* sit) in slush for over a year. Delivered manuscripts that were under contract went unread (and *still* go unread) at various houses for 6-8-12-16 months. They were overwhelmed with choice and overstocked with inventory. So why on earth would they *negotiate*? Where were you going to go with your book if you wanted a better royalty rate, or more reasonable reversion terms, or to retain digital rights? ▶

Precisely because there *was* nowhere else to go, suppliers (writers) fought to get in those doors and accepted bad terms (and even accepted publisher intrusion into how we managed our own writing businesses, such as the increasingly widespread policy that only *agented* writers could submit a book for publication). All because the big houses dominated the print distribution system to such an enormous extent.

So, yes, as someone who was in a terrible negotiating position in my full-time career for many years in that system, I certainly understand the situation that the big houses are in when dealing with Amazon.

I understand it so well precisely because viable alternatives to signing bad terms with publishers is a *brand new* thing in my long-term writing career. It's also incredibly empowering and freeing, and I'm thrilled to death with it!

I know far more writers earning income from their writing now than ever before. I also know lots of experienced writers who are now making the best money they've ever made—and enjoying their careers the most they've ever enjoyed them. *None* of us want to go back to the old system where we have virtually zero negotiating power with the only viable venues for our work and no other realistic options if we don't sign that deal. No way!

So, sure, I appreciate the publishers' frustrations in confronting Amazon. But I'm not *sympathetic*, since these are the same companies that were—and *still are*—implacable in their “industry standard” and “non-negotiable” contract terms with writers, after all.

Finally, as already stated, I do not see Amazon as my friend or champion, either. Amazon is just doing far and away the best job of selling books (particularly e-books), and that gives them enormous power. Indeed, I don't disagree that it gives them *too much* power. I just disagree with many people about the solution. (For example, I disagree with all the antitrust apologists out there that collusive price-fixing is a good solution to Amazon's market dominance.) And since I am on *my* side, not the side of any big corporations, the only solutions I like are the ones that are best for *me*.

I believe the very best solution would be a thriving, competitive retail book market with many successful vendors and outlets. Because I believe that the more competition there is, the better my own choices and negotiating position will be in this world of big corporations that are not on my side.

Laura Resnick writes the Esther Diamond urban fantasy series for an independent publisher whose list is distributed by a major house, and she self-publishes her backlist.