



2009 Edgar® Week Symposium

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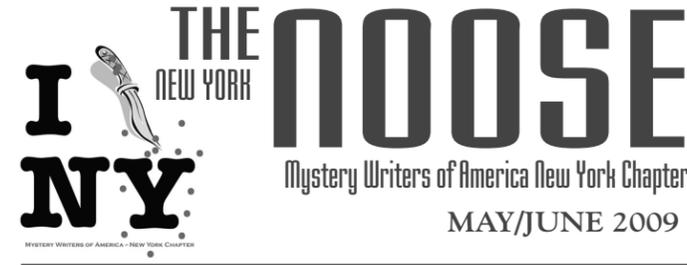
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Location: Lighthouse International – Lighthouse Auditorium
111 E 59th Street (between Lexington and Park Avenues)
New York, NY 10022

Join us for an entire day of top-notch panels. Novice or pro, you'll benefit from hearing the experts discuss their strategies for all facets of writing and publishing. Cost: \$90 members, \$125 non-members - with a \$35 retroactive discount for those who join within 30 days after Symposium. For further detail www.mysterywriters.org

Can't make it to the Symposium? Order tapes, MP3/CDs, or a DVD

Mystery Writers of America
New York Chapter
32 Broadmoor Lane
Westbury, New York 11590



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear MWA/NY members,



At our April meeting, before the fun started with the authors and agents, we heard a few words from Judith Kelman, best-selling author, winner of the Mary Higgins Clark award for her *Summer of Storms*, and former member of the MWA National Board.

But she wasn't there to plug her latest release.

Instead, she told us about Visible Ink, a writing program for Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center patients and survivors that offers participants the chance to work individually with a professional writer on a project of their choice.

I'm thrilled to report that the MWA-NY Chapter board has embraced Visible Ink and we hope that a lot of our members will donate their time and talents to this extremely worthy cause.

I remember when my first wife was dying of cancer how programs at MSKCC, whether it was the lending library, the art center, or the stand-up comedians who would drop by the patient lounge, helped her, for a time, be more than her disease. Visible Ink will do the same for others.

There's no minimum time commitment required. You can work as your writing schedule permits. Sessions are arranged between writers and patients at mutually convenient times.

Thanks to MWA-NY member Persia Walker, who first introduced me to Visible Ink, I signed up last December. I've worked with three writers and, like Judith said, the work is rewarding and energizing.



Best selling
mystery/suspense
author
Judith Kelman

So, if you're looking for a terrific way to use your writing skills to help others, please contact Judith Kelman at jkelman@aol.com or 212-535-3985.

Chris Grabenstein
President

IMPORTANT DATES

- April 29** Edgars Symposium – Lighthouse International – Lighthouse Auditorium
111 E 59th Street (between Lexington and Park Avenues) New York
- May 15-17** Mystery and MAYhem in The Hamptons. Further information available in this newsletter.
- May 20** Contemporary Traditional Mysteries: Fair Play Puzzles in the Modern World. Mid-Manhattan Library.
- June 3** Joint chapter meeting with Sisters In Crime: Irene and Christine Cornell, the veteran CBS crime reporter, and her courtroom artist sister. National Arts Club.
- June 17** Killers on the Loose: New York Thrillers. Mid-Manhattan Library.
- July 14** International Thrillers: Spies, Lies & Deadly Eyes. Mid-Manhattan Library.

EDITOR'S LETTER



Hi all,

As I write from upstate New York, where it was in the 70s yesterday and the 40s today, I hope that by the time you read this we will all be enjoying reliable spring weather. One thing you can rely on, however, is that we here at *The Noose* are always looking for ways to make your writing life better and more productive. In this issue, Bob Stein deals with estate planning, the Mentor panelists tell us how to get published and some of our members list their favorite books. Interspersed with that you will find details of the abundance of meetings, panels, and general good times.

I look forward to hearing all your comments at mhannan-mandel@yahoo.com

Slainte!
Marie
Marie
(you know, *Marry* rhyming with *Larry*)

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Peggy Ehrhart - send all entries to pehrhart@sprynet.com

Want to serve on a committee? Just let any board member know.

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Library Conversations-
Calling All Writers

Call for Authors

Additional New York Public Library, Midtown Branch, panels have been scheduled for 2009. If you're an active member and interested in participating as a panelist or a moderator, please let Jane K. Cleland know at jane@janecleland.net. The library prepares flyers far in advance of each event, so we need to finalize our participants in the next few weeks.

Tuesday, Sept 22: Police Procedurals: Detective Fiction by the Book

Wednesday, Oct 21: Why Kids Love a Good Scare: Writing for Kids and Young Adults

Tuesday, Nov 17: Cozy Mysteries: Amateur Sleuths and Feline Detectives

Wednesday, Dec 16: Legal, Medical, and Psychological Thrillers: How Professionals Use Their Inside Knowledge When They Write

These panels are a terrific opportunity to meet scores of readers. Most programs attract 50 to 100 attendees. All events are held at the Midtown Branch (diagonally across the street from the library with the lion guards), Fifth Avenue & 40th Street, on the 6th floor, at 6:30 p.m.

MWA/NY Mentor Program Submissions

Forty manuscripts were submitted to the 2008/9 MWA/NY Mentor Program. Based on ratings of the mentors and evaluation by the Mentor Committee, the first fifty pages of manuscripts written by Patricia Galiotos, H.T. Narea, and E.J. Rand were selected for review by an established literary agent. A summary of each is provided below.

Bitter Pills by Patricia Galiotos

A year after her husband's murder, psychologist Eva Peretti moves back to New York to lose herself in chaos at a school for troubled teens. Eva's plan to keep her mind busy and her chin up collapses when her colleague – and new love interest – is murdered in his office after hours. Grief is drowned out by warning bells when Eva realizes that one of her young clients knows more about the crime than she's willing to share. Fear for the girl and hidden guilt spur Eva to push for the truth, drawing the killer's sights to her next. Eva needs all her instincts to reveal twisted school secrets and stop the killer from carrying out a supremely horrific plan.

The Gates of Andalus by H.T. Narea

Kate Molares tracks money transfers from Latin America to Europe, which may link Venezuela, Cuba, the Basque and al-Qaeda to a recent Madrid terrorist bombing. Her mission takes her from a defense intelligence facility in Washington, D.C. to: the oil-fueled economy of Caracas, the beaux arts buildings of Old Havana, a hedge fund king's magnificent estate in Greenwich, the United Nations, and the Islamic-influenced terrain of the Iberian Peninsula.

In the process, Kate meets a past flame, Nebibi Hasehm, who unbeknownst to her is the central player in a plot of a new form of terrorism – financial terrorism. Nebibi uses a multi-billion dollar Islamic Finance Fund as a legitimate platform to instigate a financial domino effect onto the already crippled U.S. financial markets. Kate follows her passions while Nebibi is torn between his obligations to extremist causes and his feelings for Kate.

Dark Sea by E.J. Rand

Gary and Becca are celebrating their first anniversary on a cruise and enjoying a second honeymoon until their cabin neighbors disappear and Gary spots the diamond ring the woman claimed she never took off – on the corpse of an "accident" victim. The captain warns them to stay out of it but, investigating on and off the ship as it visits Caribbean islands, the couple encounters a dangerous cast of passengers and officers hunting for a missing \$86 million – and one of them has set his sights on Becca. Whatever they do, a series of suspicious events wraps them ever more tightly into a mystery they must figure out. Can they survive attempts on their lives, work through unexpected marital problems, and kill to save one another? Who winds up in the *Dark Sea*?

PLEASE NOTE: If you have not yet received your Mentor Critique please contact Catherine directly at cmaiorisi@worldnet.att.net and put "Mentor Critique" in the subject line.



New books out . . . and more on the way!

The fourth book in Jane Cleland's Josie Prescott Antiques Mystery series, *Killer Keepsakes*, is out from St. Martin's Minotaur, and Jane has signed with St. Martin's for two more books in the series. Donna Nowak's circus murder mystery *Dark Horse* will be out in August with StoneGarden.net publications.

On the move . . .

After Camilla Trinchieri's *The Price of Silence* was translated into Italian last year, The Institute of Palazzo Rucellai in Florence asked her to teach creative writing to its Advanced Italian Language students. Camilla happily returned to Florence for another two-week teaching gig in March.

Short stories . . .

Richard Ciciarelli had his second mini-mystery, "Recipe for Murder," published in *Woman's World* in the March 30 issue. Jane Cleland's second Josie Prescott short story, "Designed to Kill," will appear in *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine's* June 2009 issue.

Mystery onstage . . .

Richard Ciciarelli's interactive mystery play *Who Killed Cousin Klem?* will be performed by the Phelps Community Memorial Library as a mystery dinner fundraiser the last weekend in April. Another of his mystery plays, *Murder on Campus*, will be performed by the Waterloo, NY, Kiwanis Club as a fundraiser in June. The Phelps Library has been putting on Ciciarelli's mystery plays annually for ten years, while the Waterloo Kiwanis are using a Ciciarelli play for the second time.

And on the radio . . .

Donna Nowak's story, "Saved by Miss Bell," is being broadcast by the Shoestring Radio Theatre in San Francisco in June and is currently being developed for a stage production in New York City.

Please submit items for "What's Noose?" to Peggy Ehrhart at pehrhart@sprynet.com. You are encouraged to submit them in the form you'd like to see here.

Come On A Walk Down Memory Lane

Do you have stories about the history of *The Noose*?

Do you have all the copies from the beginning? Do you remember some exciting articles, columns, or contributors? We are looking for contributions to an article about the history of *The Noose*. Join with us to complement the excellent memories and mementoes of *Noose* founder, Marty Meyers by contacting me at mhannanmandel@yahoo.com/.

I look forward to learning even more about our newsletter.

ASK THE LAWYER



Dear Bob,
I am the beneficiary of my mother's estate, including her royalties. She wrote a book published in 1965 by Abelard Schuman. It was picked up by Scholastic for their book club and made into a made-for-TV movie. There's a clause in her contract that says that if the book is out of print for longer than 6

months, rights to publish it revert to her. It's been out of print for many years. I'd like to try and get it republished or maybe do a print on demand thing. Here's the problem – I can't find any trace of Abelard Schuman, so obviously I can't notify them. Is there some other remedy available to me? Like publishing notices in certain trade publications or in national newspapers the way the government does before it holds an auction? Thank you.

Dear Beneficiary: I do not know of any notice procedure that would satisfy the obligation to request reversion. Was the book published by Abelard Schuman of New York, or of London? Especially if the book was published by the New York office, but ultimately in any case, I would recommend calling the business reference desk at the Brooklyn Public Library, and, if that doesn't provide an answer as to which publishers bought out Abelard Schuman and its successors, the reference desk at the New York public library. They should each have reference materials which may enable them to trace the history of the company and what became of it.

In addition, I would call the Scholastic contracts and royalty departments and ask them whether they have any records of what became of their licensor (the royalty department might have the name of Abelard Schuman's successor in interest).

Finally, Google produced the following current (or near current) information:

Powered by MacRAE'S Blue Book - America's Original Industrial Directory
Abelard-Schuman Ltd.
Wester Cleddens Rd.
Glasgow, Lanarkshire, G64 2NZ
Scotland
employee size: 10
products: Periodicals

A letter to the company in Scotland may well flush out some useful information about their former American affiliate.

Alternatively, you could take the risk of just self-publishing the book without first reverting rights, and expect that if anyone else still claims the rights, they will come to you. If your

publication is limited in scope, and if the book has been long unavailable in any edition, any damages due the claimant would be small, and that would enable you to initiate reversion procedures. You could even print a notice on your copyright page indicating that you had tried unsuccessfully to find Abelard Schumann's successor, and inviting that entity to come forward.

Hi Bob,
I have one book out, one coming out in September and a third under contract. I don't have a will but I realize I need one. Can I make a will that leaves the rights to an heir or do I need any special arrangements to insure that the books can continue to be published if something happens to me? Thanks.

Dear Needs a Will:

Yes, you can make a will that leaves the rights to an heir. You can also name a literary executor, or state in the will what duties relating to your books you would like your regular executor to perform. In either case, you should clearly state who is entitled to receive any royalties under existing contracts, who will own the copyright (careful: if different people inherit existing contracts and the copyrights, then you are creating a potential for battles between them, since it would be in the interest of the copyright owner to terminate existing contracts and enter into new contracts), and who will have the right to deal with your publisher(s).

I'm not sure how anyone can "insure that the books can continue to be published" ... books go out of print rather quickly these days. If you write non-fiction, I suppose you can leave instructions for your executor that s/he should cooperate with any desire by the publisher to hire another writer to revise your books if and when necessary, even though that is likely to result in reduced royalties to your estate and in credit shared with the revisor (both reduced credit and reduced royalties are still better than no credit or royalties, if the book is considered obsolete and is put out of print).

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

Bob Stein counsels and represents people at all levels of the entertainment industry from writers to film producers. He has represented David Baldacci and Janet Evanovich and spent 13 years in-house at Random House, Simon and Schuster and Warner Books before entering private practice.



ASK THE WRITER

AUTHORS SPEAK by Lisa Cotoggio

I recently chatted with Alafair Burke, Jonathan Hayes, Thomas O'Callaghan and Lee Childs about the five books they would strongly recommend as insightful, fascinating must reads, this is what they had to say:

Alafair Burke – Author of *Angel's Tip*

If books were honest in their depiction of the often slow and arcane American legal system, the term "legal thriller" would be quite the oxymoron. To keep the action moving, authors must sometimes sacrifice detail. That is not to say that good fiction can't be accurate. As a criminal law professor and former prosecutor, I insist on procedural accuracy in my own writing, lest my students lose all respect for me. If NYPD Detective Ellie Hatcher searches a suspect without a warrant, I might not spend a paragraph explaining the legal justification for the search, but trust me, I could. As a reader, however, I can respect a writer's choice to stretch the bounds of lawful process. What matters more to me as a reader is whether a book accurately depicts the culture of lawyering.

These five novels portray lawyers who run the legal gamut, from the most elite elechons of the bar to the barely licensed. All of them capture the quotidian details of the lives of lawyers, and all of them, most importantly, are terrific reads.

Scott Turow's *Presumed Innocent*. While too many courtroom thrillers substitute legal jargon and evidentiary spats for character and plot development, Turow showed us that the twists and turns of a criminal trial could make for gritty drama.

John Grisham's *The Firm*. The plot required suspension of disbelief, but that initial depiction of the allure of elite law firm life to a poor kid like Mitch McDeere is as realistic as it comes.

Michael Connelly's *The Lincoln Lawyer*. Through cynical, money-motivated Mickey Haller, Connelly shows us the daily work of a trial lawyer, all the way down to his choice of office supplies.

Linda Fairstein's Alex Cooper series. With Cooper and detectives Mike Chapman and Mercer Wallace, Fairstein captures the real-world rhythms between cops and prosecutors.

Dylan Schaffer's *Misdemeanor Man*. Gordon Seegarman is a complete and total slacker who handles only petty misdemeanors, pleads out as many cases as possible, and reserves what little ambition he has for his Barry Manilow cover band. He's also a complete and total delight.

Jonathan Hayes – Author of *Precious Blood*

As a New Yorker, and, more particularly, as a forensic pathologist in the NYC medical examiner's office, I had a pretty rough time after 9/11. The work was physically and emotionally exhausting, the hours endless, and when I got home each night or each morning, I just wanted to collapse and never wake up. I got stuck inside my head, all the stuff I saw during my shifts running 24/7 in an endless loop.

I thought that sensual experience would be the surest route out of my thoughts and back into my body. I'd been writing about food for some time, free-lancing for *Food & Wine*, *Gourmet*, the *NY Times* etc., and as a contributing editor at *Martha Stewart Living*. I felt my palate might be getting jaded, defaulting too quickly to rote conclusions without fully experiencing the food. I decided to focus more on smell; concentrating on scent would develop my palate, and, more importantly, help me better appreciate the dishes about which I was writing. I became interested in natural perfumery; where commercial perfumery is basically chemical juggling, natural perfumers work with essences of flowers, leaves, barks, roots, seeds

and fruit. My refrigerator began to fill with little brown glass vials of bergamot and neroli, my cupboard with extracts of vetiver and balsam, and I started mixing my own perfumes (all irredeemably awful).

I'm in no way an earthy-crunchy, mung bean-hugging New Ager. I simply treasure the intense physical connection to the natural world that comes from breathing in the sweet essence of French hay, or in considering the subtle differences between jasmine sambac and jasmine grandiflorum. I find the practice grounding, meditative and beautiful. In my first novel, *Precious Blood*, the hero, Jenner, a medical examiner damaged by his own 9/11 experiences, is a natural perfumer. It helped me, and I hope it helps him.

Five Books on Scent and Perfumery:

Mandy Aftel's *Essence and Alchemy*. An elegant introduction to the history, theory, practice and romance of natural perfumery.

Steffen Arctander's *Perfume and Flavor Materials of Natural Origin*. The natural perfumer's bible, an encyclopedic overview of plants, oils, their properties and production. At \$350, a pretty pricy encyclopedia, too.

Luca Turin and Tania Sanchez's *Perfumes: The Guide*. There's absolutely no better perfume critic than olfactory physiologist Luca Turin. Here's Turin on Paris Hilton's signature perfume: "a rehash of every peachy-powdery-cutesy-girly thang ever made, a sort of triple-distilled absolute of furry toys." Turin nails it every time, and always hilariously.

Giuseppe di Lampedusa's *The Leopard*. Scent is hard to describe. What do roses smell like? Why, they smell like roses! Smells get short shrift in fiction, so I was very conscious of scent settings when writing *Precious Blood*; my favourite compliments were those praising the sense world I'd created. Di Lampedusa writes beautifully about scent and flavor – the chemical senses most closely allied to memory, which is at the very center of this exquisite elegy to the waning Italian aristocracy.

Patrick Suskind's *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer*. Suskind's novel is an olfactory tour de force, a fantastic story of accelerating obsession and murder amid the reek of 18th century France.

Thomas O'Callaghan – Author of *The Screaming Room*

Helter Skelter by **Vincent Bugliosi**, fascinated me and likely kicked off my writing career.

Other fascinating reads would be:

In Cold Blood by **Truman Capote**
The Killer Book of Serial Killers by **Tom Philbin**
Mindhunter: Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit by **John Douglas**
Perfume by **Patrick Suskind**

Lee Childs

Five Great Novels with Music in Them

The Damned and the Destroyed by **Kenneth Orvis**
One Last Hit by **Nathan Walpov**
Killer Tune by **Dreda Say Mitchell**
High Fidelity by **Nick Hornby**
Jamaica Blue by **Don Bruns**

A top ten finalist in the 2002 Nevada Film Office 15th Annual Screenwriting Award, Lisa Cotoggio has worked as a script doctor for Summer Moon Productions and with Classical Alliance as a TV series creator and writer. You can contact Lisa at www.lisacotoggio.com.



Marie Hamnan-Mandel via podcast

“Looking for an agent is like looking for a needle in a haystack but you don’t know what the needle looks like.” (Jessica Faust – panelist)

The annual Mentor Panel included Marcia Markland, Editor Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin’s Pess and Jessica Faust, Literary Agent BookEnds, LLC. Catherine Maiorisi moderated and asked the questions unpublished writers want answered.

Introduced by Chris Grabenstein, MWA-NY President, who reminded the audience that he had been an unpublished author only three years before, Chris thanked the Mentor committee led by Catherine, which included Ken Isaacson, Deborah Stine and Meredith Cole.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Jessica, in common with many agents, gets on average 40 queries a day, seven days a week.
- Both Jessica and Marcia are now seeing three times the amount of submissions they normally do.
- Most major publishing houses will not accept work from unagented writers.
- Harcourt has announced that they are closed to new submissions. However, both Marcia and Jessica stressed that if the right book comes along a publishing house will buy it. Deals are still being done and books are still being sold.
- In 90% of cases, an agent will earn back her commission in the contract negotiations.
- An auction is when publishing houses are bidding for the right to publish a book.
- At St. Martins the decision about the advance offered is based on the profit/loss calculations made about expected sales and, therefore, the royalties a writer might receive.
- A rejection from an agent or publisher may have nothing to do with the quality of your work. If a publisher has just bought a book on your very topic, they may turn you down.

- Many conferences now have “pitch sessions” where writers can pitch their work to agents/ editors.
- You must catch the attention of the agent/editor with the first chapter. You don’t get a second chance to impress. Agents/editors will not re-read work unless they have specifically asked to see the rewrite.
- In the mystery writing field, having a series character is helpful in selling a first-time novel.
- The publisher of your book is going to hope that you will do as much marketing as you can on your own. Most writers are not sent on book tours.
- Regional marketing is the best way to proceed with your first novel.
- Guest blogging on other writer’s blogs can be more effective than having a blog of your own.
- From the agent’s point of view, quotes from other writers about your work included in a query, are not useful. However, the editor will be very interested in that information.
- According to Jessica, never give an exclusive to an agent during the querying process. Be honest and tell the agent others have been queried but do not waste time. Always make multiple query submissions.
- Having real-life experience in the field about which you are writing is not necessary, as long as the information used is accurate. It’s all in the writing!
- Shorter is better – a 100,000 word book will cost \$27.95 at the bookstore. Keep your book at 70,000-80,000 for a better chance of being published.

Marcia and Jessica gave invaluable guidance to the, as Chris Grabenstein put it, “not-yet-published”:

- ⇒ To get an agent you need a professional query letter in which your writer’s voice shines through.
- ⇒ The most important part of a query letter is the blurb – a paragraph which explains the hook and the heart of the book.
- ⇒ The hook is what makes your book stand out and it should be clear and compelling, making the agent anxious to read your book.
- ⇒ Set up a query letter critique group with people who have NOT read your book and see if after reading your query they want to read your book. If not, keeping trying.
- ⇒ Think about your blurb as a “what if?” but don’t use the question explicitly.
- ⇒ Fashion your blurb as if you were writing the back cover of your book.
- ⇒ In the query mention all prior writing experience and membership in writing organizations (MWA-NY).
- ⇒ If you have ideas about how to market your book, put them in the query but these will be more useful in selling the book to the editor than in getting the interest of the agent.
- ⇒ Pay attention to your title as it might help you get the attention you need for your book. Don’t choose one that has been overdone.

- ⇒ The key to a good title is to make it memorable and relevant to the book – don’t choose a childish sounding title for a adult thriller.
- ⇒ The synopsis only comes into play once the agent has asked to see chapters.
- ⇒ The role of the synopsis is to let the agent know that there is plot follow-through and whether the book will live up to the reader’s expectations and must contain all the key conflicts in your book.
- ⇒ The blurb does not give away the ending. The synopsis must give the entire story.
- ⇒ Check the agent’s website to know how long to wait before asking about a submitted query. **DON’T EVER CALL UNLESS YOU RECEIVE A CALL FIRST.**
- ⇒ Before self-publishing consider your reasons for doing so. If you wish to build a writing career, persevere with the more established publishing routes.
- ⇒ Consider sending your work to small publishers who have the time to edit and nurture beginning writers. Major publishers keep an eye on what comes out of these publishing houses.
- ⇒ Be careful of the workshop-to-death syndrome where the first three chapters (which have been read by others over and over) are fabulous and the rest is not as good.
- ⇒ Consider having your work edited by a professional editor before submission.
- ⇒ When looking for an agent, make up three lists – the A ones you really want to get, B the less known, C the unknown. Send out to two queries to each of the lists at one time and work your way down the lists.
- ⇒ If you are still playing around with your book, it is not ready to be queried. When querying one book you should already have moved on to writing the next one.
- ⇒ There are four levels of response letters: 1. form rejection, 2. some personalized feedback, 3. a request to see more, and 4. serious agent interest.

- ⇒ If, after sending out many queries, you are only receiving form rejections consider revamping your query letter.
- ⇒ Jessica suggests that if you have the opportunity to pitch to an agent/editor spend three-five minutes talking about your book (If you can’t pitch your book in that time, you have problems.) Then use the rest of the time to ask questions of the agents – what are you buying, etc. Create a rapport with the agent/editor.
- ⇒ When pitching your novel, you are pitching yourself – **DON’T BE SHY.** Put all the important information upfront.
- ⇒ Networking is key! Marcia says that she will read the work of writers she’s met at conferences first.
- ⇒ When considering publicity the only thing that is required is a website. Doing promotion that’s not genuine to you is not going to work.
- ⇒ Put yourself in the place of the publisher/reader. Go to a bookstore and choose a book by a writer you have never heard of before. Work out how you might use the same techniques as in the book you chose to attract an agent/editor to your book.
- ⇒ Follow instructions! If the agent asks for email queries, learn how to email. Using the internet is now a standard practice in publishing. You must also be able to produce Word documents. Don’t set yourself up for failure by showing that you are not organized enough to be a 21st century author.

*At the bottom of the page is an abbreviated version of the project worksheet handout from the meeting. If you wish to receive an electronic copy of the entire project worksheet or a copy of the updated Next Steps handout (originally published in the May/June 2008 Noose) you can contact Catherine Maiorisi at cmaiorisi@worldnet.att.net and put “Mentor handouts” in the subject line. **PLEASE NOTE:** If you have not yet received your Mentor Critique please contact Catherine directly at cmaiorisi@worldnet.att.net and put “Mentor Critique” in the subject line.*

Create a Worksheet Before You Pitch

When creating your pitch, create a worksheet by answering the following questions, developed by Les Standiford:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION – Your Manuscript Title
ONE-SENTENCE DESCRIPTION
MAIN CHARACTER
WHAT HE WANTS
EXTERNAL & INTERNAL PROBLEMS
RESOLUTION
ENGAGING THE READER

Try to keep these project descriptions to one page—force yourself to distill your book down to its essence!