

RWR

ROMANCE WRITERS REPORT

JULY 2013 • VOLUME 33 • NUMBER 7

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A romantic scene of a bride and groom kissing in a hotel room. The groom is in a light-colored suit, and the bride is in a white wedding dress. A blue 'Please do not disturb' sign is visible on the right side of the image. The background is a warm, orange-toned wall.

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Betsy Prioleau

Betsy Prioleau is the author of two nonfiction books: *Seductress* (Penguin, 2004), which explores history's enchantresses, and the recent *Swoon: Great Seducers and Why Women Love Them* (W. W. Norton, 2013). *Swoon* is a multidisciplinary examination of ladies' men—real and imagined—that analyses their characters and romantic artistry over time and challenges preconceived images of the seducer.



Jen Talty

Jen Talty is a best-selling author of romantic suspense. *Dark Water*, the second book in her NY State Trooper series, hit number 10 on Barnes and Noble. Together, she and Bob Mayer run Cool Gus Publishing, where they have partnered with best-selling authors such as Jennifer Probst, Colin Falconer, Shannon Donnelly, and more.

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Send change of address to the RWA Office.

Send Dear Editor Letters, Contest Winner announcements, queries and articles to the Editor. Items for September 2013 must be in by July 1, 2013; for October 2013, August 1, 2013.

Send items for Contests and Conferences to the columnist. Items to columnists for September 2013 must be in by July 1, 2013; for October 2013, August 1, 2013.

FROM *the* PRESIDENT

BY ALLISON KELLEY, CAE

RWA Executive Director Allison Kelley is the guest columnist for From the President this month.

On Saturday, June 1, I returned to Houston from BookExpo America (BEA), and while waiting for my luggage, I saw a sign warning individuals that it's not a good idea to accept help or transportation from "helpful strangers." The warning brought to mind the last time Romance Writers of America's conference was held in Atlanta, when a company with no experience in publishing set up a table and started recruiting authors. RWA had the company removed from the premises, but not before contacts had been made and damage to several authors' careers had been done.

Think about the warning. At the very least, the "helpful strangers" are unauthorized and therefore not subject to the rules that pertain to legitimate airport employees and/or licensed transportation services. It's a fact that RWA's conference often attracts individuals and companies that fail to register or apply for industry status but still hang out at the hotel in hopes of doing business with RWA members, and the media attention over the past year related to the success of the romance genre during a time when many publishers

and booksellers are struggling will likely attract companies who may be outright predatory.

I have represented RWA at BookExpo since 1997, and this is the first year that my calendar was so full of appointments before I arrived in New York. Many of the companies that asked to meet with me are fairly new, but being new is no longer a reason not to do business with a company. What is important is how much capital the company has and whether or not it has a strong business plan. I met with several companies that I feel sure will offer valuable services to members. I also met with several individuals who have ideas that will allow them to make money from authors but who do not, in my opinion, have valuable services to offer—or they haven't reached the stage in their business development to warrant introduction to RWA's members.

Assigning the rights to your books is a big deal as, typically, authors grant rights for the life of the copyright. With so many options available, authors should choose the best publishing option for each book. While RWA cannot guarantee the viability or author-friendly business practices for any publisher or agent, the association is selective in providing industry badges and allowing individuals or companies to

offer workshops or participate in pitch sessions with RWA conference attendees. The review process is not burdensome, so I caution members against doing business with individuals or companies that may attend the conference in an "unofficial" capacity.

I also will take this opportunity to remind members that RWA offers assistance to authors in resolving complaints with editors and/or agents. RWA's ability to achieve satisfactory results may be limited by the terms of the contract and whether a publisher is well capitalized, but we are here to help. Formal complaints must be presented in writing, but we are always willing to discuss grievances before the complaint is filed. You can call RWA Deputy Executive Director Carol Ritter at 832-717-5200, extension 127, or me at extension 124. If you have questions or concerns about a contract, the time to ask for clarification is before the contract is signed.

If you are unable to join us in Atlanta for RWA's 2013 conference, we hope to see you next year in San Antonio, Texas.

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RWA NEWS

Notice of Annual General Meeting

All General RWA members are encouraged and entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting on Thursday, July 18, from 4:30–5:30 p.m. at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis in Atlanta, GA.

Although the Board is not aware of any motions requiring membership approval, any General or Charter member wishing to be represented by proxy should download and complete a proxy form: <http://www.rwa.org/p/do/sd/sid=4513&type=0>.

2013 RITA® and Golden Heart® Winners Announced July 20

Romance Writers of America will announce the winners of the 2013 RITA and Golden Heart awards on Saturday, July 20, from 8–10 p.m. ET at the Awards Ceremony at RWA2013. The names of the winners will be posted as they're announced on the RWA website, Twitter and Facebook pages. Join us on awards night and celebrate!

RWA University Takes Month of July Off

Due to the RWA Conference, RWA University is taking the month of

July off. But make sure you check out the online schedule at <http://www.rwa.org/rwau> to see what classes are coming up in August!

Your Last Chance to Register for RWA2013

The pre-conference registration deadline for RWA2013 in Atlanta is July 8. The late member registration fee is \$500, and members may register online at <http://www.rwa.org/RWA2013>. RWA does offer onsite registration (July 17–20) at a cost of \$600 for members. Note: the deadline to sign up to participate in the Literacy Autographing was May 1.

Board of Directors Declaration Deadline July 31

Members interested in running for a position on the RWA Board of Directors must declare their intent to run by July 31, 2013. Members must submit to the RWA Office a signed declaration of their intent to run for an elected Board position. Elections are held in September.

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SOLD!

Congratulations to the new members of RWA's Published Authors Network

Narelle Atkins: *Running to Love*, a contemporary inspirational romance, to Harlequin Heartsong Presents in a six-book deal. *Running to Love* is a February 2014 release.

Colette Auclair: *Thrown*, a contemporary romance, to Simon & Schuster's Pocket Star in a three-book deal. *Thrown* is a December 2013 release.

Nancy Lee Badger: *My Honorable Highlander*, a Scottish time-travel romance, self-published in May 2012.

Callie Hutton: *An Angel in the Mail*, a historical romance, published in January 2013 by Soul Mate Publishing.

Ambrielle Kirk: *Wolf's Haven*, a paranormal romance, self-published in October 2012.

Christina Lee: *All of You*, a new adult romance, in a two-book deal to New American Library. *All of You* is a September 2013 release.

Lesli Muir Lytle, writing as L.L. Muir: *Going Back for Romeo*, a

Scottish time-travel romance, self-published in December 2011.

Cindy Nord: *No Greater Glory*, a historical romance, published in July 2012 by Samhain Publishing.

Jamie Salsbury, writing as JB Salsbury: *Fighting for Flight*, a new adult romance, self-published in February 2013 by JB Salsbury Books Publishing.

Kristie Smith, writing as Katalyn Sage: *Dark Seduction*, a paranormal romance/urban fantasy, published in March 2012 by Evernight Publishing.

Roxanne Snopek: *Three River Ranch*, a contemporary romance, published in August 2012 by Entangled Bliss.

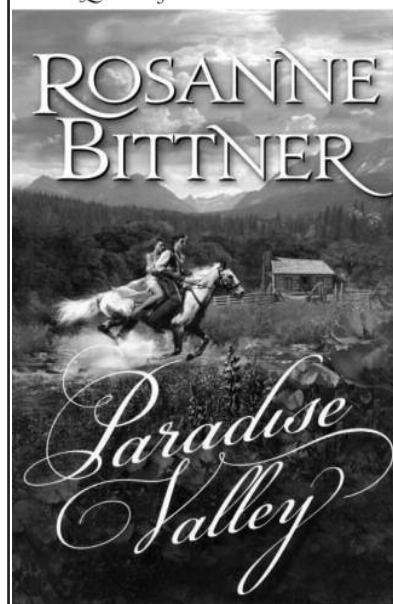
Catherine Stewart, writing as Cathy MacRae: *The Highlander's Accidental Bride*, a Scottish historical romance, published in February 2013 by Soul Mate Publishing.

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The Sold! column lists the name and book information for and reported by new PAN and PAN-eligible members. To learn more about PAN, e-mail carol.ritter@rwa.org; for information about Sold!, e-mail RWReditor@rwa.org.

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www.rosannebittner.com or
www.rosannebittner.blogspot.com

Bittner's character's spring to life extraordinary for the depth of emotion with which they are portrayed." The Publishers Weekly

THE VOICE *of* ROMANCE WRITERS

Members share what Romance Writers of America means to them



“My first advice to any aspiring romance author is always to join RWA. The camaraderie, the networking, the knowledge shared—invaluable. As an author married to a Navy flyboy, I’ve moved household seven times since I joined RWA, and every single time I had a wonderful community of authors in my new RWA chapter to welcome me to my new home.”

— Alyssa Day, *The Cursed*



“I have been a member of RWA for more than 20 years and during that time it had been an organization that protects and preserve the rights and well-being of authors. It has aided my career by keeping me informed of those things I should know as an author . . . such as new technology and advances in the writing arena.”

— Brenda Jackson, *A Brother's Honor*



“What I love about RWA is that it’s an organization a writer can grow with. At my first conference, I was unpublished and too scared to even approach ‘real’ authors. At this next one, my fourth, I’ll be multipublished and a RITA finalist. And, at each stage of my writing career so far, RWA has provided me with something valuable, whether that be fantastic workshops, networking opportunities, or friends I know I’ll keep for life.”

— Roni Loren, *Not Until You*



“I joined the RWA in 2009 with two completed manuscripts and not a single clue why I couldn’t convince anyone to take a look at them. Two years later, I had found a critique group and became a Golden Heart finalist.

Those two years with the workshops and my CPs taught me so much.”

— Ashlyn Macnamara, *A Most Devilish Rogue*



“RWA was critical to my writing career. By joining this organization, I connected with fellow authors, learned valuable information, and was able to finally look at writing as a career—not a hobby. It gave me the tools to succeed and consistently supported my growth through every manuscript and decision I made. The best part? By attending the annual conferences, I found a tightknit group of friends I call my soul sisters, who understand and cheer me on every step of the way—no matter how rocky the climb. I will always be grateful and supportive of this truly great organization and the savvy women who run it.”

— Jennifer Probst, *The Marriage Merger*

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Tell us your story! The RWR is looking for members to share, in approximately 50 words, what RWA means to them. The RWR editor will pick a select number of submissions to run every month in the magazine. Members interested in participating should e-mail their 50-word piece to RWREditor@rwa.org.

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The Phoenix Desert Rose Chapter of RWA presents the Sixteenth Annual Golden Quill Contest Awards

Best First Book

Winner: *The Unfinished Garden* by Barbara Claypole White

Finalists: *Compulsively Mr. Darcy* by Nina Benneton

Out of the Ashes by Lori Dillon

Sweet Enemy by Heather Snow

Erotic/Hot/Sexy

Winner: *Hidden Paradise* by Janet Mullany

Finalists: *The Theory of Attraction* by Delphine Dryden

Blood Fire by Sharon Page

No Risk Refused by Cara Summers

Historical

Winner: *Highland Surrender* by Tracy Brogan

Finalists: *Seven Nights in a Rogue's Bed* by Anna Campbell

A Lady's Revenge by Tracey Devlyn

The Warrior (The Return of the Highlanders)

by Margaret Mallory

The Recruit by Monica McCarty

Inspirational

Winner: *To Whisper Her Name: A Belle Meade Plantation Novel* by Tamara Alexander

Finalists: *A Promise for Miriam* by Vannetta Chapman

The Fairest Beauty by Melanie Dickerson

The Irish Healer by Nancy Herriman

The Homesteader's Sweetheart by Lucy Williams

Inspirational Romantic Suspense

Winner: *Material Witness* by Vannetta Chapman

Finalists: *A Perfect Square* by Vannetta Chapman

Standing Guard by Valerie Hansen

The Chase by DiAnn Mills

Submerged by Dani Pettrey

Long Contemporary

Winner: *The Woman He Knows* by Margaret Watson

Finalists: *A Soldier's Secret* by Linda Style

A Safe Place by Margaret Watson

Mainstream/Single Title

Winner: *Crazy Little Thing* by Tracy Brogan

Finalists: *Christmas on Mimosa Lane* by Anna DeStefano

Take Me Home by Nancy Herkness

Rules of the Game by Sandy James

When Snow Falls by Brenda Novak

Novella

Winner: *Christmas at Oakhurst Manor* by Joanna Fulford

Finalists: *Little Red Riding Wolf* by Jessica Aspen

A Lady's Lesson in Seduction by Barbara Monejam

To Rescue or Ravish by Barbara Monejam

The Unrepentant Rake by Barbara Monejam

Paranormal/Fantasy/Sci Fi/Futuristic

Winner: *The Lord of Illusion* by Kathyrene Kennedy

Finalists: *Pack of Lies* by Kimila Bowling

Soul Bound by Anne Hope

Warrior Reborn by Melissa Mayhuc

Noah's Ark: Chronicles of Kassouk Prequel

by Vijaya Schartz

Regency Historical

Winner: *Sweet Enemy* by Heather Snow

Finalists: *Ridiculous* by D.L. Carter

Unbuttoning Miss Hardwick by Deb Marlowe

Romantic Suspense

Winner: *For Better or Hearse* by Ann Yost

Finalists: *Stowaway* by Becky Barker

Never Coming Home by Evonne Wareham

Short Contemporary

Winner: *What Happens in Vegas* by Kimberly Lang

Finalists: *On the Verge of I Do* by Heidi Betts

Rancher's Son by Leigh Duncan

Once a Good Girl by Wendy S. Marcus

Tomas: Cowboy Homecoming by Linda Warren

Traditional

Winner: *Sunny Days for Sam* by Jennifer Shirk

Finalists: *The Man Who Saw Her Beauty* by Michelle Douglas

Single Dad's Holiday Wedding by Patricia Thayer

*Congratulations to all of our
Winners and Finalists!*



Note: Finalists are listed in alphabetical order by author's last name.



BEYOND US BORDERS: A LOOK *into* the GERMAN ROMANCE MARKET

BY HEATHER MICHELE

An insider's look at the German romance market with German romance magazine *LoveLetter* Founder Kris Alice Hohls and Editor in Chief Tina Dick

As romance book industry professionals, it is our responsibility to be aware of what happens to books, in print and digital format, beyond US borders. There are numerous factors affecting how they are being sold to consumers, where they're distributed, and the way they're priced. Each country mandates their own rules and regulations within the book market, and the impact, for better or worse, shapes the reader culture.

We're going to take a jaunt across the Atlantic Ocean and make our way to the country of Germany, where German romance magazine *LoveLetter*'s founder, Kris Alice Hohls, and her editor in chief, Tina Dick, will give us a tour of the country's current book culture, readership, romance market, and publishing landscape. Prepare yourself for a real eye opener.

The German Book Culture

According to Wikipedia, culture encompasses the range of human phenomena that cannot be attributed to genetic inheritance; it's the distinct way that people living in different parts of the world classify and represent their experiences and act creatively. Let's hone in and investigate what this means relative to German romance readers.

"We're a book loving and buying nation. Always have been."

— Kris Alice Hohls

When I asked Hohls to describe the German mentality toward reading, she said, "We're a book loving and buying nation. Always have been. With a rich literary heritage. After all, it was Johannes Gutenberg who invented printing in Germany around 1439."

Yes, it's fair to assume that reading is a favorite German pastime and has been for centuries. Dick said,

“We do like to present ourselves as an intellectual people, but as everywhere else, the number of passionate readers is dwindling.”

Culture's Influence on Genre Trends

A country's culture and the genres the readers desire go hand in hand. Germany is no exception. Hohls said, “Unlike in America, where maybe country music or NASCAR racing have made their way into romance novels, in Germany, there is no similar phenomenon. Something that German publishers hope will make an impact is the just recently introduced subgenre of ‘regional chick-lit’ (stories set in various distinctive regions like the Bavarian Alps).

“Germans are known to be one of the most well-travelled people in the world. That might be one of the reasons why exotic settings are very popular. Scotland and Italy are definitely settings German readers crave more than say the United States or Germany, as they are less available in books.

“Apart from some subgenres (western, patriotic books, etc.), editors tend to look to the US market for new trends. Not all of them work in Germany.”

Which makes complete sense. We're two distinct nations, with independent likes and dislikes. Some of the trends that didn't fare well in Germany include urban fantasy, science fiction romance titles, and cozy mysteries. Dick added, “Once, it would take years for trends to make it to Germany, and now, in some instances, it can be done in months, like *50 Shades of Grey*.”

The (Maddening?) German Romance Market

There is a disparate *modus operandi* when comparing the German and US romance marketplaces, at the expense, literally, of German readers. They're feeling discouraged, and rightly so.

Hohls and Dick explained, “For German readers, there is nothing more frustrating than not being able to buy the same books and digital book formats that are available to American readers (due to geographic restriction) or being excluded from contests only open to US readers or to be denied the special offers (free or lower priced books) on local platforms such as Amazon.com. When it comes to

romance readers, we are already a global village and share our love for the genre openly and without borders.”

What Are Geographic Restrictions?

Hohls and Dick mentioned geographic restrictions when we discussed what they're up against. They said, “When a US publisher only buys the North American English publishing rights and not the world English publishing rights, the book will only be available to readers living in North America. Readers in the UK or elsewhere in the world wanting to purchase the e-book won't be allowed to do so due to where they are based (their address).

“Once, it would take years for trends to make it to Germany, and now, in some instances, it can be done in months, like *50 Shades of Grey*.”

— Tina Dick

“One recent example was Kristen Ashley's *Own the Wind*. When Grand Central published the digital format in the United States on April 2, we couldn't buy it, as the author kept the right to self-publish the e-book outside North America and hadn't made it available at the same time. Sometime during the last four weeks, she released her copy and now it's also available on German platforms. We were lucky. Very often though, the world English rights don't sell (the author can't find a UK or Australian publisher), and we have to either wait for the print version or our next US trip.”

Fixed Book Pricing in Germany

Back to the no discounts conversation. Germany has a fixed book price law (yes, an actual law) for German language books. This means that each book is individually priced at a determined rate and may not be sold for any other amount—it's illegal. Hohls said, “This allows for all books to be treated equally, and, of course, for small booksellers to be able to compete with the chains.”

Can you imagine the uproar American readers would have if we didn't get our deals? We'd feel cheated, ripped-off, and reading would become a luxury. Retail prices can be steep, and passionate readers would be forced to think twice before loading their cart with books and paying full price.

Dick said German readers are used to the prices. What people have problems understanding is why e-books are not (or only slightly) cheaper.

I'll do a cost analysis, based on actual data, to capture the reality of which I speak. In April, Nora Roberts (one of Germany's favorite authors) released *Whiskey Beach*. Using the present exchange rate of €1.00 to approximately \$1.303, the below table illustrates how much it would cost Germans versus Americans to purchase *this one item* in hardback and e-book formats and the percentage of savings those in the United States realize.

Look at our percentage of savings. On average, US consumers are paying 36 percent less on hardback books and up to 17 percent less on e-books, depending on where we buy.

At present, the German VAT (value added tax) of 7 percent is included in the cost. Recent reports claim this standard tax could rise to a whopping 19 percent after the September 2013 elections. Not a pleasant thought.

But, German readers are resourceful. On non-geographically restricted books, they can (and do!) purchase US print editions inexpensively (due to a good exchange rate, but without sales promotions) through online booksellers.

For many, it's more affordable to read books in English than in German. For a US paperback release, they

often only pay half of what the German translation of the same book would cost.

To make it even more complicated: A Nora Roberts book might be released in hardcover in the United States but as a paperback in Germany, making it then more cost effective to wait for the German translation.

"The average reader still prefers print books, especially mass market (not as pricey)."

— Kris Alice Hohls

Hohls educated me on the popularity of hardback versus digital books. She said, "We are still behind the US market, but it is a growing segment. With the fixed book price law and most e-books only—if at all—minutely cheaper than the print equivalents, there is no big incentive in switching formats. The average reader still prefers print books, especially mass market (not as pricey)."

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm all for the success of the mom and pop stores and online booksellers, and I'm not saying this fixed book law didn't originate from a source of good intention. I just have to think that maybe the expense of one book, with the possibility of a 19 percent VAT, multiplied by a handful of books purchased each year without discounts could be a (financial) deterrent for German readers, and another factor to what appears to be the decline of "passionate readers."

Book	Germany			United States – Amazon.com				United States - Barnes & Noble.com			
	Euros	Dollars	Conversion Rate	Euros	Dollars	Conversion Rate	Savings	Euros	Dollars	Conversion Rate	Savings
<i>Whiskey Beach</i> Hardback	€19.40	\$25.28	\$1.303	€11.89	\$15.49	\$1.303	38.72%	€12.26	\$15.98	\$1.303	36.78%
Kindle/Nook	€11.99	\$15.62	\$1.303	€9.97	\$12.99	\$1.303	16.85%	€11.50	\$14.99	\$1.303	4.05%

Where Do German Readers Buy Books?

Another trial German readers experience is that category romance titles are not available in bookstores and can only be purchased from newsagents at train station bookshops, some supermarkets, and directly from the publisher's website.

So, how do the majority of readers get their hands on a book? Dick said, "Although nearly 50 percent of books are still purchased in actual bookstores, most of them don't carry a lot of romance novels" and people have to search elsewhere.

Hence, readers seeking their fix must venture to newsagents and bookstores in train stations and airports, which are more likely to have mass-market paperbacks on their shelves. Approximately 15 percent of sales are conducted via online bookstores.

The Publishing Landscape in Germany

We've been focusing a lot on German readers, but they're not the only ones facing challenges in the market. Due to copyright law, German authors are prohibited to use titles of books that are still in print/are protected and can't be used without an agreement with the original publisher.

We have a plethora of novels with the same title in the United States, as copyright law does not protect titles.

On the flip side, Hohls was pleased to share: "The big German publishers usually pay decent/good advances for translation rights and are reliable contractual partners, meaning they really pay the royalties—and in due time."

Book Releases and Their Translation from English to German

Very rarely, and only if the manuscript is available for translation well in advance, will publishers release a new book on the same day in Germany as it is released in the United States. "Sometimes," Hohls said, "publishers feel pressured to release the translations of highly anticipated books (new releases from best-selling authors) close to—or even before—the US release, so that readers don't resort to the original English versions because they don't want to wait [for the German translation]."

How quickly do books get translated? Dick gives us some insight. "It depends on how urgent it is. With very popular authors and series, publishers try to have the books translated as quickly as possible (good examples are Lara Adrian, Nalini Singh, Diana Gabaldon, and, recently, EL James and Sylvia Day). It also depends on the length, and of course, the genre.

"Although nearly 50 percent of books are still purchased in actual bookstores, most of them don't carry a lot of romance novels."

— Tina Dick

"And not every book that German readers would like to read is translated, as the costs are high. Readers in Germany get irritated, or even angry, when publishers drop a series because the sales weren't strong enough. Or when publishers don't pick up certain books or series. Although Germans have mandatory English classes in school, not everybody feels confident enough to read their books in English, but for some this is a reason to switch from translations to the original versions."

Romance Learning Opportunities and Industry Publications in Germany

We're fortunate enough to have Romance Writers of America as a professional resource, rich with learning opportunities and networking platforms, here in the United States. It's only recently that courses have started popping up in Germany.

Hohls said, "One publisher just founded an academy (Bastei Lübbe); the classes are very expensive though. We don't have an organization for aspiring authors. The organization of German language romance authors (DeLiA) only accepts members who are already published and is very small (approximately 100 members)."

There are romance conventions and conferences held in Germany, and one of those is Hohls's very own *LoveLetter* Convention in Berlin, Germany (<http://www.loveletterconvention.com>).

Who attends? “We have visitors not only from German-speaking countries, but from all over Europe. European readers hardly ever get a chance to meet their favorite romance authors anywhere else. Listening to the authors attending last year’s convention, they all say that our readers made them feel very special, welcome and loved.

“Our goal is to comprehensively inform readers—and authors, editors, and publishers—about the romance market and have them fall in love with the genre, just like we have.”

— Kris Alice Hohls

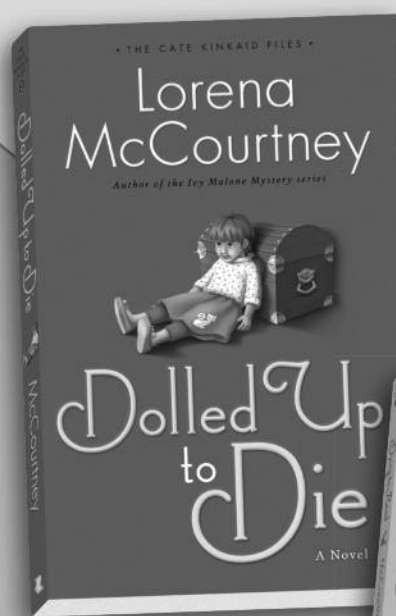
“With the Frankfurt Bookfair being the biggest fair for books and rights taking place in Germany, we are very well connected. However, bringing over authors from overseas for book tours is expensive.”

Another way professionals may connect and communicate is through publications. Back in 2005, Hohls knew about romance magazines like *RT Book Reviews* and industry magazines like the *Romance Writers Report*. She looked for a similar publication in Germany and couldn’t find any. Knowing that there was a large romance readership in Germany, she decided to start her own, and *LoveLetter* magazine was born.

Hohls didn’t think it would last more than two issues, but then with the help of two volunteers, Dick being one of those (and later more), and the growing interest of readers and publishing professionals, it evolved from a small fan magazine into a monthly full-color print magazine available in stores and through subscription.

LoveLetter is the first—and still only—print romance magazine in German offering interviews with authors (German and foreign, mostly from the United States) and sometimes industry professionals (mostly editors), news, articles by authors, reviews of new releases, previews of upcoming releases, etc. Hohls said, “Our goal is to comprehensively inform readers—and authors, editors, and publishers—about the romance market and have them fall in love with the genre, just like we have.”

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New from *New York Times* Bestselling Author
Lorena McCourtney

...


“Fans of Janet Evanovich’s Stephanie Plum will enjoy getting to know amateur sleuth Cate Kinkaid.”

—*RT Book Reviews* for *Dying to Read*



When Cate Kinkaid receives a frantic call about a triple homicide, she drives to the scene against her better judgment—aren’t triple homicides more up the police department’s alley?—only to find that the victims are not quite who she expects. Now she has a new rule to add to those she’s learned in her short stint as an assistant private investigator: always find out if the victims actually have human DNA.

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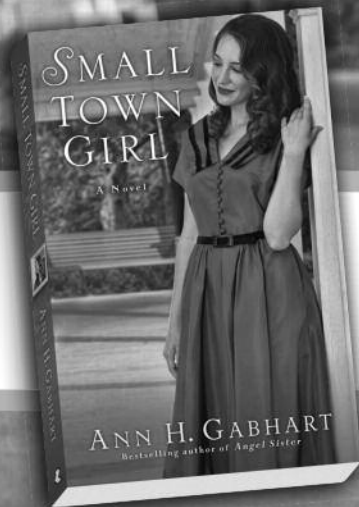
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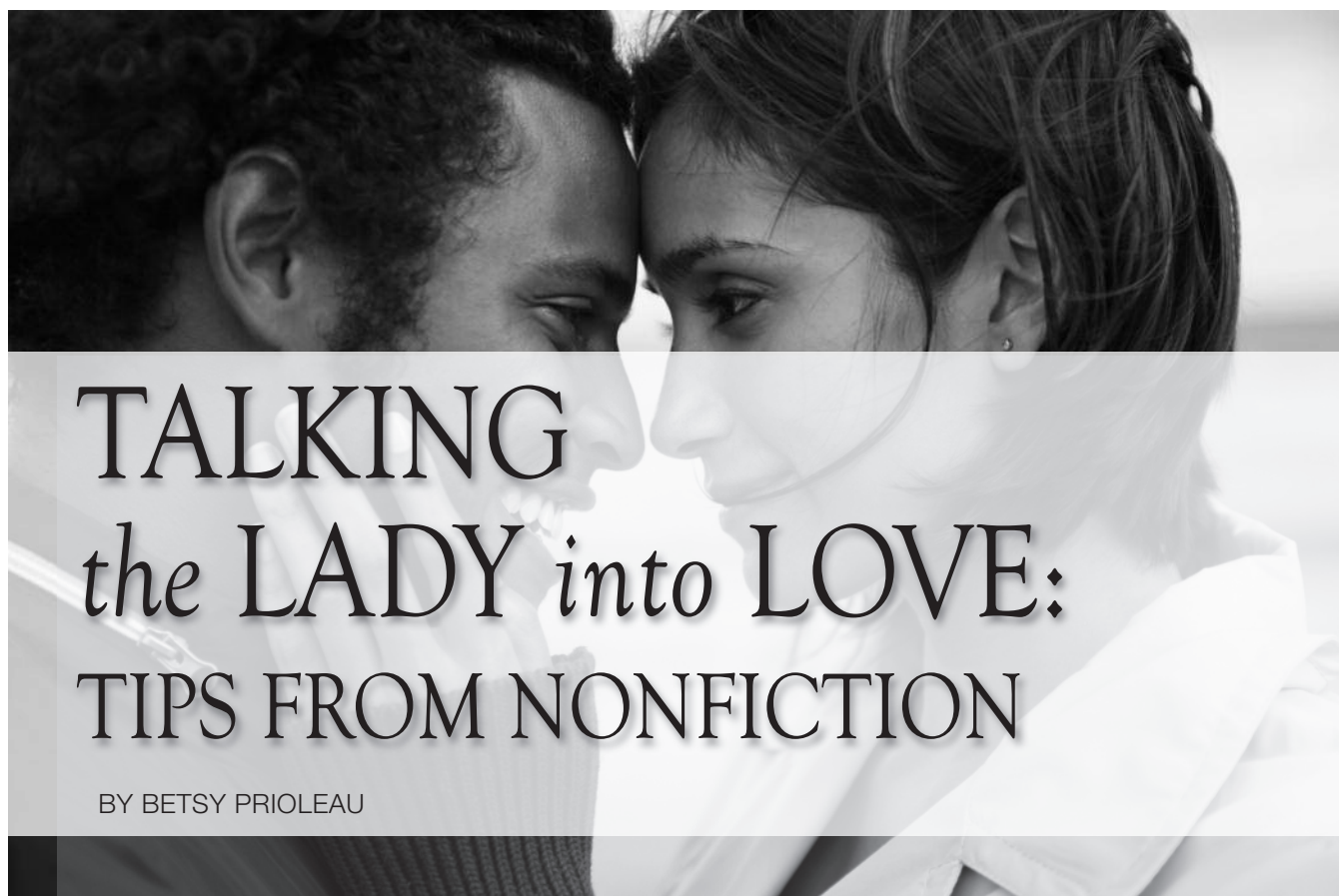
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TALKING the LADY into LOVE: TIPS FROM NONFICTION

BY BETSY PRIOLEAU

How romance writers can use seductive language to amp up a hero's allure

“Talk to me,” pleads Margot at a fifth anniversary dinner with her husband, Lou, in the movie *Take This Waltz*. “I have nothing to say,” replies Lou and returns to his crab cocktail.

In the wings awaits a rival with plenty to say. Daniel, the artist next door, takes Margot to a bar and flips her out of her mind with his delicious spiel, telling her at length what he will do to her in minute detail. Her marriage is soon over.

Conversation can do that—ignite a forest fire of desire. Seduction, said the philosopher and lady-killer Jean-Paul Sartre, “is fascinating language.” Men throughout time have talked women into love with them. There’s an art to it (largely forgotten) that romance writers can use to amp up the hero’s allure and dialogue. As the

professional lover in Søren Kierkegaard’s *Diary of a Seducer* says, “I could use conversation to inflame.”

Tuning Up: Voice

Talking to seduce begins with voice. Your main male character should sound luscious—velvety, warm, and melodious. Women, psychologists tell us, hear better than men and listen with their libidos. In particular, they favor expressive male voices that are soft and musical, which may be related to the fact that inflected, lilted speech correlates with empathetic abilities. Lord Byron, the 19th century love idol, spoke in a low, harmonious baritone that bespelled women.

Certain accents, too, are seductive (Irish and Italian rate highest), although dialects get tricky on the page. More important is that the hero’s voice is distinctive and music to the lady’s ears—mellow and mellifluous. Writes the French author Alice Ferney, “A voice can enter deeper

inside you than a man's sex. It can inhabit you, lodge in the pit of your stomach," and whip desire as "the wind whips up the sea."

Tuning In: Listening and Body Language

It takes more than a lush voice to beguile women. How a man listens is erotically loaded. The female craving to be heard, to have men's entire attention, can't be overestimated. For legions of women, listening is love, a "way of saying I love you." History's greatest lovers, from Casanova to Warren Beatty, are inspired listeners.

To listen seductively isn't as simple as it sounds. A man must be all in, mentally and emotionally engaged, and attuned to subtexts and unvoiced feelings. A suave romancer also supplies spirited feedback—go-on signals like "mms" and yeses and apt gestures.

Unlike passive, immobile men, a ladies' man is physically eloquent. He uses eye contact 75 percent of the time as he listens (versus the 31 percent norm) and is facially expressive. He mimics a speaker's expressions and, whenever possible, flashes a full-on, genuine smile—a strong courtship cue and female sweet spot.

The rest of the body gets in on the action, too. Women relish nods, gesticulations, and open postures from men while they talk. Lovable male leads cull the whole listening repertoire to make a woman feel acknowledged, validated, and smitten.

Talking: Overture and Genres

Overture

Most men are afraid at the first hello and don't know how to pique desire in a woman. This is a nuanced conversational specialty that used to be called "flirtage." The tone is provisional, a game of perhaps. A skilled charmer keeps the banter light and entices a love interest through a whiff of mystery and a play of reveal and conceal, advance and retreat. He teases, he flatters, he provokes.

"Lord Cupid" Palmerston, the 19th century British prime minister, was a fabled flirt and favorite of women, and he typically approached prospects with a playful, ironic opener: "Ha, ha! I see it all," he would say, "beau-

tiful woman neglected by her husband—allow me . . ."

Overtures can be subtler than this and tailored to specific women. But a romance hero always finesses the "catch." Flirtatious banter, done with flair, fun, and a to-and-fro of maybe-maybe not, is the first step to infatuation. He leaves the lady wanting more, much more.

Conversation can do that—ignite a forest fire of desire.

Preview

After the preliminaries, when real talk sets in, men have four modes of conversation to enamor women. Brilliant monologues don't belong. Dialogue that inspires desire is interactive, an improvisational duet. Premier lovers both shine alone and coordinate conversation for two, talk that (1) soothes, (2) amuses, (3) entertains and informs, and (4) poetically enchants.

Sweet Talk

Love can be won without conversational pyrotechnics. Sometimes, the occasion calls for a slow groove, romantic comfort food. Linguists call this phatic speech, the kind that calms, assures, and lulls a lady into that lovin' feeling.

Content hardly matters; the object is to ease a woman's qualms and induce a sexy languor. Soothing dialogue can take many forms. In this mode, the hero treads softly, coaxing, discreetly self-disclosing, expressing sympathy, small talking, and drawing out confidences.

The "enchanter" François-René de Chateaubriand earned his entire romantic acclaim through his intimate, sedative conversations. One by one, countesses and beauties fell hopelessly in love after his caressing, soulful tête-à-têtes. "How have you passed the night? How I wish," Chateaubriand asked one, "I could know all about it."

For more intimate moments, the pre-language of childhood is a potent intoxicant. Phrases like "baby girl" and the repetition of gentle, honeyed words swamp the reward center of the brain with feel-good chemicals and

promote attachment and repose.

Herbert Methley, the lothario of A.S. Byatt's novel *The Children's Book*, lures the heroine to bed as he croons, "Don't think, stop thinking," he whispers, "now is the time to stop thinking, my dear, my darling." Romantic heroes should be fluent in phatic. As the Hindu erotic bible, *The Kama Sutra*, teaches, "When a girl is relaxed, she gives a man signs of affection."

To listen seductively isn't as simple as it sounds. A man must be all in, mentally and emotionally engaged, and attuned to subtexts and unvoiced feelings.

Comic Talk

A lover worth his lady also should be able to make her laugh. The funny bone is a high-volt erogenous zone, especially for women. They prefer mates who are witty and, according to a Stanford University study, are more stimulated by verbal humor than men. Shared comedy is no-fail recipe for love. It weakens inhibitions, excites through incongruity and surprise, releases endorphins, and creates sexual heat and intimacy.

How to be funny? Much depends on the man's character and the woman in question. Some women fancy dry insight; others, farce and tomfoolery.

Author Roald Dahl burned up the track romantically with his bizarre sense of the ridiculous. He once seduced a French actress with a black comic tale about a rich man who made gruesome bets and captivated his future wife, movie star Patricia Neal, with his zany wisecracks over a candlelit dinner.

Comic possibilities are endless. A romancer can employ clichés with a twist, wordplay, exaggeration, understatement, droll self-deprecation, or outright buffoonery. Some words, too, are just funny, like gherkin, bumfuzzle, and schlub. And almost any sentence pays off with a surprise snap at the end. "I'm free of all prejudices," deadpanned W.C. Fields, "I hate everyone equally."

The off-color quotient has to be handled with care, and heroes can't be nonstop comedians. But the old proverb is spot on: "A maid that laughs is half-taken."

Venus, the Roman goddess of love and beauty, is the "laughter-loving" goddess.

Smart Talk

Besides humor, there's another form of conversation women find delectable: talk that shimmers with intellectual and narrative excitement. This may be due to the "ornamental brain" theory. Cultural anthropologists speculate that alpha females in prehistory chose suitors who put on the fanciest cerebral show, who flaunted the highest *G* factor (general intelligence), and told the punchiest narratives. The appeal potentiates when a woman joins the display and trades ideas and stories.

A story-telling sweetheart has a strong romantic edge—well-told narratives work erotic sorcery. Visualized settings, vivid characters, suspense, conflict, and dramatic finales can transport listeners and foster desire.

Ivan Turgenev, one of 19th century Russia's great storytellers and ladies' men, conquered woman after woman with his vivid anecdotes. In his novella *Rudin*, he describes his alter ego, Dmitry Rudin, regaling guests with such a colorful, moving account of his German travels that a young aristocrat in the audience (as happened to Turgenev) falls ill with love.

Highbrow conversations—the exchange of knowledge and big ideas—can be equally seductive. Intellectual brilliance, according to love philosophers, can be felt in "our most erogenous parts." But that's only if the dialogue sparkles.

The medieval scholar/lady-killer Pierre Abelard enraptured students and women with his dazzling delivery. He enlivened his learning with jokes, eloquence, and emotional fervor, and made every woman in Paris yearn for "a place in his bed." During his scholarly dialogues with Heloise, he awakened her genius *and* libido simultaneously, prompting a love affair that survived persecution and lasted a lifetime.

The brain can be the sexiest part of the male anatomy—if the man knows how to spin his smarts and stories with conversational charm.

Lyric Talk

A poetry-spouting romancer? These heroes seem as dated as duennas and dance cards. Poetry, however, is a timeless turn-on and an industrial-strength aphrodisiac to women.

Since antiquity, suitors have wooed ladyloves with lyrics, and a recent study ranks poetry as men's third most effective courtship tactic.

Language itself may have evolved from mating calls, and poetry is language at its most ecstatic. In thermal imaging experiments, love poems actually produce a parched tongue and fevered brow and can cause "an exaltation comparable to making love."

Rhyme, rhythm, and the mesh of sound and sense, plus poetry's emotional hit are precision-crafted to entrance women. Actor Richard Burton said he had a "tried and true system;" he "gave [women] poetry." His conquests were legion, including Marilyn Monroe, Lana Turner, and a throng of leading ladies. Throughout his decade-long union with Elizabeth Taylor, he showered her with verse. "He whispered poetry—we kissed," she recalled, "Happiness!"

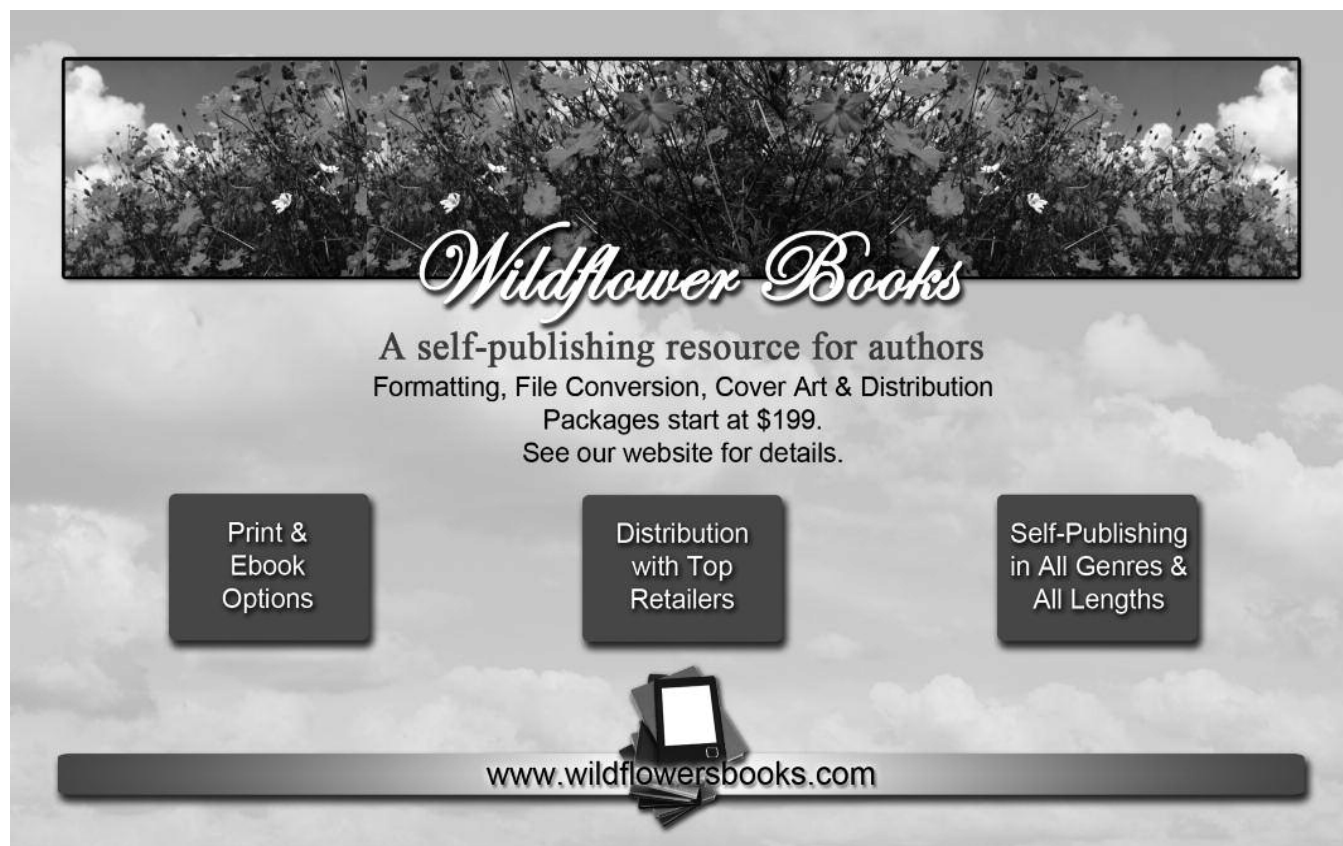
Romance heroes don't have to be certified poets to achieve this. There are volumes of poems to consult and customize for the moment—sensual picks like Octavio

Paz's "Touch" and Ann Sexton's "Kiss" or Shakespeare's sonnets. Even the prose-poetry of ordinary speech, such as Tea Cake's poetic raillery in Zora Neal Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, can wilt women. And it's infectious, releasing the poet in the heroine.

The brain can be the sexiest part of the male anatomy—if the man knows how to spin his smarts and stories with conversational charm.

Almost nothing inspires romantic passion like this "music of the soul." "Lavish fine words" on women, wrote Ovid in ancient Rome: "There's magic in poetry; its power can pull down the bloody moon."

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The advertisement for Wildflower Books features a background of a field of wildflowers under a cloudy sky. At the top, the company name "Wildflower Books" is written in a large, elegant script font. Below this, the text "A self-publishing resource for authors" is followed by "Formatting, File Conversion, Cover Art & Distribution" and "Packages start at \$199. See our website for details." Three dark rectangular boxes are arranged horizontally, each containing white text: "Print & Ebook Options", "Distribution with Top Retailers", and "Self-Publishing in All Genres & All Lengths". At the bottom center, there is a stack of books with a tablet or smartphone resting on top of them. Below this stack, the website address "www.wildflowersbooks.com" is displayed in a white sans-serif font on a dark horizontal bar.

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Authors taking control of their careers in the digital age

Right now is the best time to be an author; however, it is also a very confusing and scary time for authors. Publishing has drastically changed as self-publishing has become a viable option for authors, along with a variety of options in between traditional and pure self-publishing. The last three years, we have seen incredible growth. Bob Mayer was at Digital Book World back in 2011, where he heard a panel of agents dismiss that e-books were only 3 percent of the market and not a major player. Digital books exploded and currently make up a share of the market few of the pundits predicted, and it's still growing, though at a slower pace. Just this past January, Digital Book World did a survey that concluded that a third of traditionally published authors wanted to try their hand at self-publishing. This is a huge shift in the last three years.

More change is coming. And it's more important than

ever that authors take control of their careers and their rights. Career management is no longer about getting the next book deal but finding the best path to readers.

Many Roads to Oz

There are two basic philosophies on which we have built our business, Cool Gus Publishing: First, there are many roads to Oz, and Oz means many things to different people. Second, writers create the product (a story, not a book), readers consumer the product, and everyone in between must add value. Understanding these two concepts and incorporating them into your business plan as an author will give you the foundation to control your career going forward into the chaos of publishing.

In the past, the most common way to get published was to land an agent and sell to a traditional publisher. With the creation of e-book readers, and specifically the Kindle, the road to publication has changed drastically for all writers from the *New York Times* bestseller right down

to the first-time author. Early on, the success stories came out of those who had control of their backlist rights. People like Barbara Freethy, JA Konrath, and, of course, our own Bob Mayer were turning their backlist into gold and in a big way.

Taking a step back, there was a lot of talk about e-books, e-book rights, and royalty rates for e-books. Many contracts had to be revaluated (some were, most were not). As many authors saw their prints runs diminishing and bookstores started closing, they looked at taking their backlist to e-book, if they had the rights. If they didn't, they began fighting for them. If publishers can hold on to the rights, they will, and in some cases, publishers will and can sell the rights of some of their titles. In some cases, it's worked out for the author, and in other cases, not so much.

The "Hybrid" Author

The "hybrid" author is the face of the future. Authors like JA Konrath, Bella Andre, Marie Force, Hugh Howey, and CJ Lyons are trailblazing this new frontier. Bella Andre did something that New York said they'd never do: a print only deal, leaving the e-book rights with the author. Marie Force and CJ Lyons are working with publishers alongside their indie releases, maintaining more control, and, most importantly, giving their readers what they want most, a good book.

And then there is Jennifer Probst, one of those "overnight" successes who has been in this business for a long time and publishing longer than most realize. *The Marriage Bargain* hit the *New York Times* best-seller list with a new press called Entangled. (Just as an aside, many publishers in New York rejected this book, including Harlequin. Rejection doesn't equate "not good enough.") Probst now has a deal with Pocket, but she also is moving forward with a publishing partnership with Cool Gus where we will bring out a new series to which she will maintain all the rights and control.

None of these authors went into this process blindly. They defined what success (what Oz) meant to them and then did whatever it took to get there. They acted and they adapted. And they took risks. Lyons is a great example of this, as her career did not always go as planned. When one door shut, she found another one to open. Lyons knew exactly what she wanted, and she went after it, even though, at times, she was afraid it wouldn't work out.

Don't Be Afraid to Ask for Help

Self-publishing is somewhat of an oxymoron. It is very difficult to do it truly alone. Ask those doing it. They've hire assistants or gone into partnerships or both. When we speak at conferences, someone always goes up to Bob and asks, "Where can I find my own version of Jen?"

Once you can clearly define what Oz means, then you figure out how to get there. Without a roadmap, you are likely to get lost.

Content is *king*, and the number one priority for a writer is to write. Publishing for the Internet (whether it be in print or e-book) requires more than just slapping on a nice book cover and uploading a file. Jen could go on for hours about formatting and HTML and how much she hates Word as a source file, but she'd put us all to sleep (Bob is currently rolling his eyes as he doesn't care, he just wants to write).

And then there is metadata, and that's just not pricing and product description. There are keywords and figuring how the heck are people going to find your books because, unless you are Nora Roberts, no one is Googling your name. It's great if you command the page when you Google your name, but it's better if you command the page with a keyword that people use in searches *and* images of your books, author mug shot, etc., come up. This requires a little knowledge of search engine optimization (SEO) and also consumer behavior on the Internet. Jen is in her glory right now, but Bob is going to shut her down. You get the point.

Controlling Your Destiny

It truly is a great time to be an author. We have more opportunities to not only publish, but also to make a living doing it. And, more importantly, we are in a position where we are finally in the driver's seat. We can control our own destiny in publishing.

But with this control comes a great deal of responsibility. At every conference we attend, there is a

sense of fear in the air. Fear from authors that they will make the “wrong” decision—the only wrong decision is not to make one.

Whether we have been published in New York, with a digital press, self-published, or are still considering our options, the first thing we should do as writers is consider our goals. Where do we want to be in a year? Three years? We have to define what Oz means to us. Set a strategic goal. Do we want to write our memoir for our children? Do we want to be a *New York Times* bestseller? Do we want make a living writing? It used to be that if one wanted to be a *New York Times* bestseller, then the only option was to sign with a New York publisher. That has changed as writers like CJ Lyons and Marie Force have hit these lists with e-books that were self-published. We had dinner with Marie Force at NJRW conference in October 2012. She sat across from us and stated, “I will be a *New York Times* bestseller. That is what I want.” In February 2013, that goal for Force was achieved.

Once you can clearly define what Oz means, then you figure out how to get there. Without a roadmap, you are likely to get lost.

Who’s Adding Value to Your Career?

This brings us to our second philosophy: writers produce the product, readers consume the product, and everyone in the middle has to add value.

Agents have always played an important role in an author’s career. This role is changing, and agents are adapting, making sure they add value to the author’s career as the agent works for the author, not the other way around. In the past, it was nearly impossible to sell to anyone other than Harlequin without an agent. The agent’s job was to get you the best deal possible. Writers relied on agents to basically manage their careers and publishers to promote their books. Once again, the Internet changed all this. More and more of the promotion is falling on the author. And now that digital publishing is possible, and the royalty rates compared to New York are so much higher, authors are finding themselves in quandary.

When it comes to working with an agent, you have to ask yourself, what value is this agent adding to my career? How are they helping me get to Oz? If you are a hybrid author, things like managing foreign rights come to mind, or helping authors get the right deal for their traditionally published books, making sure the author can still self-publish while also writing for another publisher. Bella Andre used an agent for her print-only deal, and Hugh Howey used Kristen Nelson as an agent for his deal.

Agents often focus more on the advance, and in the print industry, the advance is where the money is. But this is changing as advances diminish, print runs decrease, and physical shelf-space disappears. No one wants to see another bookstore go out of business, but as professional authors, we have to be prepared for changes. When Borders closed, we saw the writing on the wall; it hurt a lot



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of authors and publishers. Borders may not have been the biggest player in the market, but they did sell a lot of books. That shelf space is gone forever because the print business in physical stores is not expanding, it's shrinking. E-books, however, are still expanding.

The only certainty in the future of publishing is that it will look very different three years from now.

If there is a direct line between the author (producer) and reader (consumer), then why do we need agents or publishers? What value do they add to the process? This is a question individual authors must answer for themselves. When making the decision to go with a publisher, the same questions need to be asked. Print distribution is still something to consider. It's just another way to reach readers and for as long as stores stock books, it's a viable option. But, and this is the beauty of it, it's not the only option. Also, consider that 30 percent of print sales right now come online via Amazon alone, which makes something like Createspace viable, especially as the price point of

print-on-demand (POD) publishing continues to decrease.

Contracts are a big issue with publishers. Most are boilerplate, and most aren't that great. They are slanted toward the publisher, and many publishers won't negotiate. We want to be published, but is giving up all our rights the way to go? One of the great things about today's environment is that authors have the ability, because this is still a metrics system, to negotiate depending on how their self-published books are doing.

The Long-term Picture

In fact, this is the last key to leave you with: when the music industry imploded from the onslaught of digital downloads, those who survived and prospered did so one of two ways. They either went on tour (not likely for authors) or they controlled the rights to their music. This is critical for authors. We have already seen, and will see more of, the selling of author contracts between publishers. And with each sale, the author's royalty slice gets smaller and smaller. The most critical career decision to consider right now is signing any form of contract and what that will mean three, four, five, or more years down the line. Balance the short-term gain against the long-term one.

Because the only certainty in the future of publishing is that it will look very different three years from now.

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CALL ME POSEIDON: MY THREE-PRONGED APPROACH to PUBLISHING

BY TRISH MILBURN

The pros, cons, and cautions of each publishing model

It's no secret to authors that the publishing industry is changing rapidly these days, and the rate of change seems to be increasing like the speed of a runaway train heading downhill. In a relatively short amount of time, the number of options available to authors to bring their books to readers has multiplied. Faced with choices, some authors have chosen to stick with traditional publishing only. Others have decided to go all in with self-publishing, also known as indie publishing. Others, including myself, have decided to take advantage of several different types of publishing as well as writing books in different genres that cater to different reading markets.

If I were asked to encapsulate my personal philosophy for my writing career, it would be that I don't like having all my financial eggs in one basket. If you only have one egg in your economic basket and that egg is broken, suddenly you're unemployed. And if you've ever been dropped by a publisher, you know how incredibly scary

that can be if you don't have another publisher to fall back on. I came to the multiple eggs in the basket mindset because history is filled with booms and busts, and diversification is a good model to adopt whether you're investing, farming, or publishing books. If one of my streams of income were to suddenly dry up or totally disappear, I want to have other streams still flowing in because, quite frankly, I like to be able to buy groceries and pay the electric bill.

This article, adopted from a workshop that I've presented to RWA chapters, showcases the three prongs of my publishing attack plan—large publishers, small publishers and self-publishing—as well as the pros, cons and cautions associated with each. These are my personal experiences, but I believe they are shared at least in part by other authors.

Large Publishers

For this category, I'm talking about big publishing companies like the "big six," Harlequin and other companies that have a substantial presence in bookstores

and extensive worldwide distribution. I published two books with Penguin/Razorbill and have now published eight books through Harlequin with three more scheduled for the months ahead. Like all the categories of publishers discussed in this article, these larger companies have their own set of pros, cons and cautions, and I'll be looking at all of the categories with a critical eye. It's up to you to decide which ones are right for your career plan.

Pros:

- An advance. In most cases, you at least have the guarantee of making some money in the form of an advance. Even if the book doesn't earn back the advance, that money is yours.
- A distribution network. Yes, the industry is changing, but these companies still have extensive distribution networks in place, and you may be more likely to see your books in bookstores.
- Prestige. Say what you will about the empowerment of electronic publishing, but for some people, it's still not a real book unless it can be found in a bookstore. I'm not saying that mindset is right, but I can say it's still exciting to see my books on store shelves, whether it's a bookstore or the grocery store while I'm buying exciting things like broccoli and shredded cheese. And I have relatives who only buy paperback books because they don't have and will never have an electronic reader. I like for them to be able to find my books.
- Established networks for getting books into foreign markets. And, yes, you also can self-publish in many markets outside North America now, but it's a bit of a different ballgame because of discoverability, which we'll discuss later.
- For some publishers like Harlequin, they have a built-in reader base and dedicated book club members.
- You may have opportunities for additional projects such as online reads, novellas, anthologies and continuities, especially if you build a reputation as being easy to work with and dependable.
- Special emphasis such as flashes on your covers, close-together release dates for trilogies or other series, and inclusion in special promotions may help boost sales.
- You're only responsible for the writing and the editing as well as however much self-promotion you decide on.

Cons:

- There's the potential of getting a little lost as one of a large number of authors. Even big publishers have limited resources, and often those resources will go to their biggest sellers. If your publisher-backed public relations and advertising are limited, it makes it harder to become a bestseller.

If one of my streams of income were to suddenly dry up or totally disappear, I want to have other streams still flowing in.

- You don't have control over your cover beyond perhaps an art fact sheet. Knock on wood, I've been very fortunate so far in receiving wonderful covers from all my publishers. But we all probably know of at least one author who has received a cringe-worthy cover at some point in her career. And even if it's not cringe worthy, it might still not live up to what the author imagined for her work.
- You can't control your release schedule. This is especially frustrating if you are a fast writer and the number of slots are limited.
- Niche books have a harder time finding a home with a large publisher.
- You may receive a lower royalty rate than with other options.
- You're paid two to four times a year and have to deal with reserves against returns.

Cautions:

- Read your contracts very carefully and know what parts you can change for your betterment. If you are not comfortable doing your own contract negotiation, strive to sign with a good agent or hire a literary attorney.
- Make your option clause as specific and narrow as possible, freeing you up to explore other options with different books.
- Make the reversion clause as specific and limited as possible. This is becoming more important with digital versions being evergreen.

Small Publishers

In some cases, the term small publisher might be a bit of a misnomer. However, I've employed it to distinguish this set of publishers from the truly large ones discussed above. (This can include both print and electronic publishers.)

I've published three young-adult books through Bell Bridge Books, and I know other authors who have found success with smaller publishers such as Ellora's Cave, Samhain Publishing, Sourcebooks, and others.

Pros:

- In some instances, there are fewer authors for the editors and PR staff to focus on and, thus, more time can be dedicated to each author. However, this is not always the case.
- You may have more input into your covers and the publisher's promotional efforts on your behalf.
- There tends to be more opportunities for niche books to find a home.
- Sometimes audiobooks are available to more authors than just the bestsellers.
- Contracts may be more author friendly, but remember to go over any contract with a fine-toothed comb. And then do it again. I don't think the vast majority of publishers are malicious, but the fact is they are a company in business to make money. It makes complete sense that they would write contracts to their financial benefit. What you want is a contract that has plenty of benefit for you as well.
- You may receive a better royalty rate.
- Sometimes you'll receive an advance, but expect it to be smaller than with a large publisher.
- The production and release of titles often can move at a faster pace.

Cons:

- The advance may be small or nonexistent. This may work out in the end by having a higher royalty rate if the sales numbers are good.
- Your book is not as likely to make it onto the dwindling space on bookstore shelves, although this is not an absolute. I was thrilled to see my Bell Bridge Books on a large display at Barnes & Noble. Do some investigation by talking to the publisher's other

authors about their experiences. Did their books make it to store shelves, or are they depending on online discoverability?

- It may be harder to get your book noticed by large amounts of people, though this also is beginning to change.

Cautions:

- Look at how many authors the publisher has. Can they promote, provide professional editing and covers, etc., for that many authors?
- How long have they been in business? What is their track record with sales?
- Do they have a good or bad reputation for paying authors what is owed to them and on time? (This applies to publishers of any size.) Talk to their authors about their satisfaction levels.

Self-Publishing

Pros:

- Every aspect of your book's production is under your control. You can have the cover, interior book design, release schedule, book types, and promotion plan you want.
- You can check your sales numbers almost in real time, as often as you want.
- You're paid monthly in most cases, though quarterly or twice a year in a couple of others. Regular payments are a nice thing when your bills have a pesky habit of arriving monthly as well.
- You'll benefit from much higher royalty rates, typically anywhere from 35 to 70 percent for each sale.
- You can experiment with advertising and marketing and see what affect they have on sales because of the ability to see sales numbers almost in real time.
- Talented authors who haven't been able to find a spot with one of the large publishers can make their work available to readers, and several authors have found great success this way.
- Niche markets can be profitable for individual authors where they might not be for publishers because of the investment they have to make in print runs. Author Theresa Ragan found her initial success with her two

time-travel romances (*A Knight in Central Park* and *Return of the Rose*) even though that market had seemingly dried up. But Ragan found there was a core of dedicated time-travel romance fans out there that bought her books and launched her career.

Cons:

- There may be discoverability issues because of a glutted marketplace as everyone jumps on the self-publishing bandwagon. This increases the importance of putting out a high-quality product so that word of mouth and reviews can work to your advantage.
- There is no guarantee of income, which also can be an issue with publishers that don't offer an advance. Chances are you'll make something, but there's no guarantee. And even if you do make some money, there are probably more self-published authors who are earning small or modest amounts each month than there are making oodles.
- Remember what I said about putting out a quality product? That means some capital outlay for the aspects of production at which you don't excel, whether that is cover design or copyediting or both. But I firmly believe the investment is worth it. Do whatever you can to make sure that your self-published book puts its best face forward. One of the best ways to erase the lingering prejudice against self-published works is to make them indistinguishable in every way from a book published by a traditional publisher.
- You wear all the hats, so you bear all the responsibility. This will take time that you could otherwise use writing new books.

Cautions:

- Don't publish too soon. I can't stress that enough. Just because you *can* self-publish doesn't mean you *should*. Whatever you put out there is going to be a reflection of you forever. If you put out a book that is subpar and someone reads it, they will remember that reading experience and may never read you again even if you get better. Even though the rejections genuinely sucked at the time, I'm now glad my first efforts didn't sell. I'd be embarrassed to have those out there in the world with my name on them. All

those rejections allowed me the time to mature as a writer and improve my craft. I'm afraid that many writers now do not want to go through the years of rejection, and the memories of how much those

Don't publish too soon. . . . Just because you can self-publish doesn't mean you should. Whatever you put out there is going to be a reflection of you forever.

rejections hurt allows me to understand that mindset. However, my experience has been that few of us are as good as we think we are when writing those first manuscripts.

- Know your limitations and be willing to hire professional help. Bad editing and dreadful or amateurish covers hurt not only you and your potential sales, but also everyone who self-publishes. Unprofessional presentation perpetuates the stereotype that self-published works are all bad when that is not the case.
- Don't badmouth authors who choose to go the more traditional publishing routes. (And traditionally published authors should heed this advice as well when talking about self-published authors.) Everyone's career path is different, and each author is entitled to her own career decisions. Negativity never reflects well on the person being negative and can backfire.

If you've been in the publishing business more than five seconds, you know that it can be a struggle to make ends meet. That's why I advocate the multiple eggs in the basket approach. Even if you're publishing books, there may be lean times. That's when you can look for other types of eggs such as publishing articles, trying your hand at short fiction, self-publishing previously published books for which you've reacquired the rights, or any other way you can find to put your writing skills to work adding more to your bottom line. I hope you soon find your publishing basket overflowing with pretty, lucrative eggs.

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SELF-PUBLISHING FORMATTING *and* STRATEGIES

BY SUSAN DAWSON-COOK

A practical how-to on formatting your book for self-publication

You've finished that romance novel you've slaved over for months and are ready to transform that masterpiece into an e-book. Before you convert your document into formats people will read on their tablets, e-readers, and smartphones, it's important to purge any quirky characters that might make your output less than professional. Two expert bookmakers and a self-published author share suggestions on how to minimize the suffering and maximize the quality of the e-book you put out on display for everyone to see.

Lurking Troublemakers

Jay Austin, editor in chief for eXtasy Books and Devine Destinies, creates the e-books for both imprints, publishing an average of 15 e-books in 11 different formats every two weeks. Austin and other company principals constructed a list of house rules to help authors submit manuscripts free of problematic characters and formatting. The company's

copy editors also are on alert to remove miscreants that still lurk in a writer's work.

"Some things can turn into squiggles, fractions, or other weird creatures," Austin said, laughing. "Semicolons will turn to $\frac{3}{4}$ on a Kindle. If you want to avoid anything 'weirding' out your text, stick with simple basic punctuation." She considers the period, comma, exclamation mark, question mark, em dash, hyphen, ellipsis, apostrophe, and quotation marks conversion friendly. Authors are asked to shun the colon, semicolon, ampersand, percent, parentheses, brackets, braces, and the back or forward slash, since they tend to create problems.

Austin suggests creating manuscripts in Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. She said, "Open Office and Libre have a tendency to maul a document," leaving multiple formatting problems that will require extra work.

To ensure there's no weird formatting hidden in a document, Austin strips it down into what she calls a "bare basic file" in a DOCX format with a true type font. This WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) document is free of headers, page numbers, footers, fancy fonts, section breaks, and column breaks—all of which can create problems.

Stripping the Document

Judi Fennell, owner of <http://formatting4u.com> (a company providing a full gamut of book services), follows a similar procedure. “You make it sound good, we make it look good” is her company’s motto.

“Background coding done incorrectly in a document creates problems,” said Fennell, who also is an author (Manley Maids series coming in 2014 from Berkley).

Fennell’s formula for “stripping the document” involves highlighting the entire document and pasting it into WordPad to create a text-only entity. She then reconstructs the document according to the author’s specifications. She places the stripped and original document side by side on a split screen to compare the documents and adds bold, italics and other special characters to her new document the proper way.

Assigning Fonts

Once the document is stripped and proper formatting reinstated, Austin and Fennell assign fonts. “We use Book Antiqua, as it seems to cause the least number of issues,” said Austin. “Times New Roman can result in a shifting read where the font randomly changes size throughout the story on certain readers.”

Fennell believes that Courier, Garamond, and Times New Roman work best for fonts. Most readers will choose their preferred font anyway on their e-readers, she said. When asked about the font size shifts Austin experienced with Times New Roman, Fennell said she’s never experienced them.

Finding the “Trouble” Characters

After assigning the font, Austin and Fennell do a search and replace for trouble characters. Austin “replaces three points with an ellipsis, two dashes with an em dash, straight double quotes with curly quotes, straight single quotes with curly single quotes, manual line breaks with single spaces, protected spaces with single spaces, tab characters with single spaces, multiple spaces with single spaces, paragraph mark with an extra space with just paragraph mark.” Fennell also searches for double spaces after periods.

Austin then removes conditional hyphenations and centers asterisk separators (indicating point of view changes) and chapter headings. She also sets up paragraph format to indent to .02 and removes first line indents.

Know Your Microsoft Word

Both women urge authors to learn proper use of Microsoft Word. Authors mindful of proper formatting in Word are more likely create flawless e-books. Even those planning to hire a professional can save money by submitting a clean document. Fennell reviews the work and sends the author a bid based on the time she believes it will take to create a polished e-book.

Skilled Word users insert hard page breaks, paragraph indents, and use the control key (command key for Mac) instead of Format Painter to assign styles such as italics and bold to text. “Properly placed page breaks inserted between chapters prevents overlapping text,” said Austin. Fennell suggests setting up paragraph indents, line spacing, and also deselecting the “widows and orphans” option in the line and space setting before starting.

Perfecting Your Process

Dean McMillin’s three science fiction novels, *Shadewright*, *Shadowslave*, and *White Fire War*, are hits in the Amazon Kindle store. The self-published author, who publishes exclusively on Amazon.com, admits he’s still learning the hard way what doesn’t work. “I have had problems with italics ‘carrying’ on past the point they should in a sentence or paragraph. I only catch this when the MOBI file is generated. Then I have to go back to my RTF and fix the style/formatting in those sections. It’s weird because the italics will only do this in the e-book format. I have to go back and ‘persuade’ the e-book to generate right.”

After completing the conversion, “I eyeball it, find obvious errors, swear and call Amazon bad names, then fix the RTF and run it again,” said McMillin. He urges authors not to rush with the process. He’s had situations where he’s hurried and later found “heinous errors after 200 people have read it.” That’s not something any author relishes.

Headers, footers, and page numbers never belong in e-book documents, according to Fennell. What’s page five

on one e-reader may be page seven on another one. She said authors need to understand e-books “are a flowing piece of text versus a book where you can set a page up the way you want it. It’s like reading a newspaper column that never ends, that adjusts to fit the screen size of the device you’re reading on.”

“Take your time, do it right. Once that book is out there, it’s out there for life, good or bad, and it will permanently brand you.”

— Jay Austin

With every book Fennell reconstructs, she follows her own version of the Smashwords method to be sure she doesn’t miss a step. She recommends authors consult the *Smashwords Style Guide* by Mark Coker, which can be downloaded for free and offers step-by-step instruction on the process.

“I have done it so many times, I have perfected my process,” said Fennell. “I have a worksheet and go through a checklist so I don’t miss a step or forget something.” She then views each document in a previewer and allows the client to preview and certify it “before we go live.”

Authors planning to launch their books exclusively on Amazon can use the Kindle Direct Publishing platform, which allows the conversion of a DOC file into a MOBI file. Fennell warns against trusting Amazon’s online previewer. “It’s not very accurate.” She’s seen spacing issues show up in the preview that weren’t present in the live read.

Fennell recently started experiencing problems uploading DOC files directly to Amazon, when it worked fine previously. Paragraphs in “Look Inside This Book” were slammed together without indents, even though they were normally spaced in the actual e-book. “Amazon is the most involved conversion I do,” she said. Fennell now “runs it [the document] through a couple of programs” to confirm it will look okay in the book and the preview potential buyers see and now uploads it in MOBI instead of DOC.

Publishing Software and File Conversion

Austin uses Microsoft Word to create the format in HTML, Calibre to make MOBI, PRC, LIT, and LRF files, Jutoh to make EPUB, Adobe to make two types of PDF documents, and HiBook to make KML.

Calibre, a free download, “makes the most formats with the least issues,” she said. “Entering the information takes about 30 seconds a book, and making the files is less than three minutes total.”

McMillin said, “I like Calibre because it’s fast, free, well-supported and gives me pretty good formatting in the end.” His big complaint is that it “sometimes ignores page breaks.” For this reason, he reviews the document to make sure they stay.

Fennell uses Calibre and Sigil, depending on which platform she’s uploading to and which format she’s producing. “The industry grew a lot in the year since I’ve been doing this. For example, Calibre used to hate the accent on café and has finally figured out how to accept it,” she said.

Austin also uses an e-publishing program called Jutoh. “Jutoh takes about a minute per file from entering info to completion.” A demo version of Jutoh is available for free download, but the program without the ‘created by Jutoh’ line at the top of each page costs about \$40.

“I use Adobe Pro 9 to create PDF files. It points out things like bookmarks or comment boxes—both bad in a PDF,” said Austin. Fennell also creates PDF files with Adobe Pro 9.

Advice from Those Who Have Been There

Austin’s suggestion to authors poised to leap into self-publishing is, “Take your time, do it right. Once that book is out there, it’s out there for life, good or bad, and it will permanently brand you. Make sure you do a proper format before placing your work out there for the public to judge.”

Fennell offers similar advice. “You don’t want something out there that’s not top quality.” She also suggests releasing the e-book out in as many formats as possible. “You don’t know where you’re going to find a reader. You might as well touch every option.”

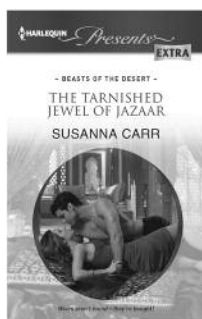
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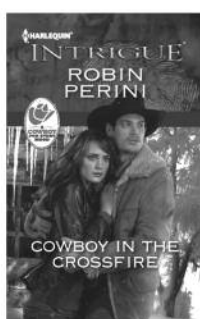
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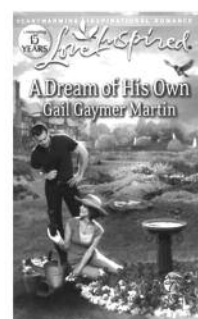
The Tarnished Jewel of Jazaar
Susanna Carr

ROM. SUS. SERIES



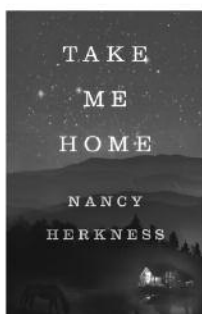
Cowboy in the Crossfire
Robin Perini

INSP. SERIES



A Dream of His Own
Gail Gaymer Martin

CONTEMP. SINGLE TITLE



Take Me Home
Nancy Herkness

ROM. SUS. SINGLE TITLE



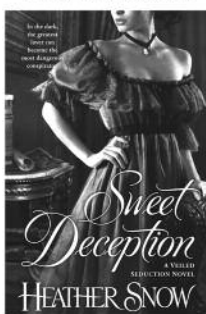
The Spy Wore Spurs
Dana Marton

INSP. SINGLE TITLE



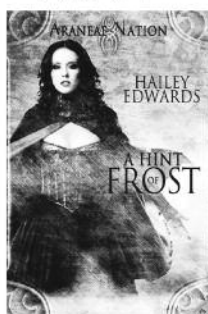
Angel of the Cove
Sandra Robbins

HISTORICAL



Sweet Deception
Heather Snow

P/F/F/TT



A Hint of Frost
Hailey Edwards

YOUNG ADULT




Pushing the Limits
Katie McGarry

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Saving the Rifleman
Julie Rowe

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DO SELF-PUBLISHERS NEED ROMANCE WRITERS *of* AMERICA?

BY DYANNE DAVIS

Does RWA membership benefit self-published authors?

A few years ago, authors began talking about acquiring their rights back from publishers and publishing their backlists. Self-publishing was attracting authors who found themselves with a story that didn't fit any of the usual niches, and there was now a means of having those stories told. It was something I'd been interested in for a couple of years, so I e-mailed some published authors for advice and instructions on how I could do this. The how to, what not to do, what works, a list of freelance editors, the best places to purchase images, how to format, and what groups to join were freely shared.

It took awhile to pick up traction, but after some time passed, I found my new venture was a very good experience and I'm making steady money. The question I'm asked most often is: Why, if I'm going the indie route, do I remain in Romance Writers of America? The question is a valid one, and I became curious to hear the answer from other authors who are self-publishing.

Teresa Wilde: I get my money's worth out of Writer's U [RWA University] courses alone.

Joan Reeves: I've been a member of RWA for a couple of decades now. I was a member before I was published, and, now, as an indie author, I remain a member. RWA is still the Voice of Romance. They have had an ongoing campaign for decades to make other publishing professionals give romance authors the respect they are due as hard-working, career-focused writers. Through their various studies and statistics gathering, among other projects, they have brought media attention to the romance genre and to the professionalism of romance authors.

Barbara Freethy: I love RWA for the writers and the support. So not having a publisher doesn't really factor into my decision to go or stay. I'm excited that they're doing a self-publishing track at the national conference. That's a good first step. The next step is to allow self-published books into the RITAs.

Deborah Schneider: I went from NY published to small press, and now I'm an indie-published author. I look at RWA as my professional organization. We need to present ourselves as professionals and to keep learning. I believe RWA gives me those opportunities.

The Value of Membership

I could probably craft a novel from the many responses I received when I posed my original question to published authors. I found many self-published writers have begun to question their RWA membership, but, on the whole, the ones who have thought of leaving are taking a wait-and-see approach.

Things are happening so rapidly that it definitely takes more time than an author without the RWA support system could deal with. Not that many years ago, romance meant a love story between one man and one woman. There was to be no other romantic interest and definitely no sex with a third person (at least for the woman). Now there's same sex, threesomes, and heroines who sleep around. Romance has changed, and so have RWA's members. Traditionally published authors are trying to remain relevant by branching out and applying what they've learned from RWA, their local chapters, and their editors to take advantage of every form of publishing, and that includes indie publishing.

Barbara Freethy: I want RWA to be moving forward and supporting writers in this new world of publishing. If RWA continues to draw the line against self-published work, then I would rethink my membership, because I don't want to belong to an organization that doesn't respect that avenue of publishing. And not allowing self-published books into the RITAs is a sign of disrespect that somehow those books aren't worthy.

Joan Reeves: Now that so many writers are seeking to publish rather than go through traditional publishing channels, RWA is working to address those needs. Since they are the only writing organization I know of that has done so much to educate and support aspiring writers, I fully expect their efforts in the indie publishing realm will be beneficial to all

Debra Holland: Even if I felt there wasn't much for RWA to offer me, I'd still stay out of loyalty and gratitude, but I know that's not the case. I'm excited for my future in RWA and in publishing.

Anonymous Author: I find when people leave RWA because "it doesn't do anything for them," they haven't made an effort to take advantages of what the organization

has to offer. They don't take RWA University courses, they don't read the *RWR*, they aren't subscribed to *RWA eNotes*, and they haven't written articles for their local chapters that get picked up by newsletters across the country. They don't know that there's four years of archived *RWR* issues available.

Anonymous Author 2: RWA has changed its stance on self-publishing and will continue to do so in the future as trends in publishing continue to evolve. The organization must make decisions and policy changes slowly, taking time to study the issues and try to benefit the majority of a group of 10,000 diverse authors. Self-published authors need to understand that and to have patience.

"I look at RWA as my professional organization. We need to present ourselves as professionals and to keep learning. I believe RWA gives me those opportunities."

— Deborah Schneider

The Wheels of Change

I am the least patient person I know; yet, I find that I agree with the need for patience. In the last 15 years or so, RWA's faced many changes running the gamut from recognized publishers losing that status, books on disks, print publishers developing e-publishing arms, the meaning of romance, and everything in between. Changes have been made. The changes didn't please 100 percent of the membership, and change never will.

Taking a quote from Spock, "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few." Looking at it from that point of view, I'm going to play devil's advocate for a moment regarding the RITAs. (I did not enter every eligible book I had from traditional publishers into the RITA, so being denied wouldn't be my reason for leaving RWA.)

Even though it is important to us as authors to feel the total acceptance of our organization and fellow authors, we

have to remember that this isn't the only area of writing that has come under fire. And while I personally don't enjoy being denied something, I know that it has to be hard for RWA to try and adhere to our mission statement, be mindful of the feelings of members who are self-publishing and members who will refuse to judge the books. I can picture the inherent problems with that: members opting out of reading indie books, hurt feelings, and more debates. It's a reality, so we may as well admit it. Every few years, a new battle ensues on what members are willing to judge. Be it erotica, inspirational, male/male, BDSM, too heavy on the paranormal, too much suspense, too much of a romantic element/not enough romance, and now the indie-published. But it's more than the organization saying the books can't be entered. We the members are the organization. Will we embrace the idea? Will we judge?

When I weigh it all out, I'm better off with RWA than I am without them.

Why Stay with RWA?

While most of the responses were from published author-members doing both traditional and indie publishing, I was intrigued by Judy Tell, whose Published Authors Network (PAN) membership was approved the day I sent out a plea for help with this article.

Judy Tell (Cinderella Heiresses series) began her writing career as an indie-published author and has done very well. She said, "This is the best group of authors you could ever hope to interact with, whether you're a multipublished bestseller or just starting out. RWA also provides a plethora of valuable resources from a list of their approved agents to classes to informative FAQs. Their annual conference rocks, too!"

I thought about it. From the top indie earners to the newest PAN member, members still want to achieve PAN status regardless of the publishing route they choose. Tell's joy at making PAN is an indication of this—they still want to remain members of RWA.

Would I like to enter my books in the RITA? Yes. But I'm holding out for the full deal when it won't have to be

entered in a self-publishing category, just a genre category.

Would I give up my membership? No, I wouldn't.

While many feel that RWA has moved slowly to include indie authors, most admit the organization never stepped in to stifle the interest. On the whole, it appears the authors who responded to my plea remain in RWA because the organization continues to support their careers, no matter in what direction they're going.

While authors are trying their hand at indie publishing for varied reasons, their reasons for remaining with RWA are basically the same:

- Being a member of a professional writers organization
- Chapter affiliations
- Camaraderie
- Education, i.e., classes and relevant information.

So, why do I remain a member of Romance Writers of America? It's for all of the above reasons and more. I am a professional. If I continue with indie publishing, then I will need the help and resources of RWA more than ever. Publishing has changed, and there is no way that I could keep up with the changes alone.

It's also the best investment I make each year. I will be the first to admit there is ego involved with being an RWA member. When we do submit to agents/editors, we proudly state that we're RWA members. There is a certain expectation that we're professional enough to know what to submit, the correct genre, and to understand—even though we don't like—the rejections.

I am one person. There is no way I can keep my finger on the pulse of every single thing that appears to change at least weekly or know what direction to take that will benefit me as an author. I would have never given indie publishing a try if not for the encouragement and help from fellow published author-members.

Whatever groups I belong to in order to help me in my indie choices are a direct result of being a member of RWA. My commitment to give indie publishing a try has been because of RWA and authors on the PAN forum. When I weigh it all out, I'm better off with RWA than I am without them.

I am doing indie publishing for now. Careers ebb and flow, needs changes. When I think of RWA, it's not this unknown entity I picture, but the face of every member I've ever met. We the members are RWA.

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CAROLINE LINDEN

BY EILEEN PUTMAN

Caroline Linden majored in math, but she's not linear. Writing software gets her where she needs to be—and Star Wars movies are indispensable.

Eileen Putman: Math degree plus Harvard equals romance writer. Explain how that adds up. In other words, how did you get to this career?

Caroline Linden: Math degree plus Harvard equals computer programmer, actually. The first thing I wrote after college was code. It really didn't occur to me to write anything else—because I hated writing—until I had two very small children and moved to a town where I didn't know anyone. The library was two blocks from my house,

though. So I started to read at night, and when the baby woke up at 3 a.m., I would finish the book. When I ran out of books, I started “improving” stories I hadn't enjoyed very much, and then eventually I started creating my own. No one was more surprised than I was when I wrote an entire book.

Putman: The first manuscript you wrote was “utterly unsellable,” you've said. Why? What didn't work? How did you learn to write stories that did?

Linden: I hadn't actually read all that many romance novels when I wrote it, and it was structured more like a literary novel. My hero went away for a long period early in the book. My heroine was a young, somewhat naïve girl. There was a gross misunderstanding between them. The first third of the book was backstory, although I didn't know to call it that. I still think the ending was pretty good, but that's probably

because something finally happened.

It was a very slow story, which is a much harder sell. People read a few pages or even a few paragraphs, and if they aren't drawn in, they put the book down. You need to get your reader invested in some way right from the start, whether it's a dramatic scene or a character who grabs your heart or an intriguing premise, because that's the first impression you make on your reader; it has to be a strong one. One important lesson from action movies!

Putman: As a self-confessed “rejection-averse” person, do you have any advice for other writers dealing with disappointment—whether from editors, reviewers or readers? Any rejection stories you'd care to share?

Linden: The key to minimizing disappointments is to maximize your chances. If you submit to every agent or publisher in the world,

you're going to get a lot of rejection. I think that's what makes the traditional publishing model so difficult: you have to send your work to strangers, sometimes a lot of strangers, and you generally have very little idea what they like.

My personal strategy was to try to meet agents and editors in person or through a friend's referral rather than a blind query. I don't know what that really told me except how easy they were (or not) to talk to, but it gave me a better chance to explain my book than a three-paragraph query.

I don't think there's any way around disappointment in publishing, except to grow a thicker skin. Rejection hurts—but if you put your heart into a book, and honestly believe it's exactly the way you wanted it and is as good as you could have made it, then you did your part. An agent or editor who doesn't love your best work is doing you a favor by rejecting you. A bad review can sting, but often the things one reviewer/reader hated, another will love. And the important thing to remember about all reviews is that there's no such thing as bad publicity. Some authors quite openly wish for a scathingly bad review from a major website, because "F" reviews get lots of hits, and some of those people will decide, I have to read this for myself.

Putman: Your first story was a mystery short story. How did you end up writing British historicals?

Linden: Those were what I liked to read. I love mysteries, too—especially the British ones—but in

my own first effort at writing a mystery, the parts I found myself working on the most were the scenes where my heroine interacted with the possible-hero/possible-villain. Finally I admitted it was a romance with some mystery, instead of a mystery with some romance, and made the switch.

Putman: Action movies, especially the Star Wars movies, have influenced your writing. And some of your titles have borrowed shamelessly from James Bond: *For Your Arms Only*, *A View to a Kiss*, *You Only Love Once*. What does Darth Vader—or, for that matter, Bond—have to offer those Regency guys?

Linden: Neither of those characters is static, and neither is perfect. They *do* things, boldly, rashly, bravely, even if they think they're doomed for doing it—but they believe in what they are doing and carry the audience with them, even when there are signs that it won't be a neat, happy ending.

Good action movies are impossible to turn away from, because you don't want to miss what's about to happen—something is *always* about to happen—and they make you want to watch them again so you can catch all the clues that foreshadowed the ending. I want to write books that readers can't put down, stories that hold attention to the very last page. And I definitely like my heroes to be men of action.

Putman: You sing the praises of Scrivener, the writing software. I assume you didn't always use it.

Can you tell us what difference it's made in your writing? I can see pantsers everywhere worrying it would compromise their creative process.

Linden: I am not an organized writer who starts at the beginning and writes straight toward the ending. If a scene becomes clear to me, I write it, even if I have nothing in front of it and nothing following it. Before Scrivener, I would have a dozen Word files containing parts of my books, and had to copy and paste them all together in the right order at the end. Scrivener essentially lets you put all those files into one project where you can rearrange them, keep alternate versions of the same scene, and compile a single manuscript at the end.

Working with one large document gets cumbersome quickly, and Scrivener allows you to manage a story in whatever size segments you prefer. It's not a creative aid so much as a storage system for all the pieces of creativity. I've written books by plotting out every chapter ahead of time, and books where I had no idea what would happen next, and Scrivener never got in my way. It's pretty easy to ignore the features that aren't working for a particular project.

It also allows you to keep all research materials (links, photos, documents, maps, video, scans of book pages, everything) right inside the project itself—I cannot stress how helpful this is, when that map or illustration you refer to daily is always at hand. And there is one small but awesome feature I really love: a status bar. Put in a daily word

goal and an overall word goal, and then write away, while the bar turns from red to orange to yellow to green. I swear fireworks go off when it finally turns green.

Putman: What's your writing routine like? Do you outline, do character studies, have regular page goals and the like? Is it an everyday process, or do you need deadline pressure to engage?

Linden: Boy, I wish I had a writing routine. It would probably involve a cup of tea, comfy slippers, and no Internet access. Every morning I tell myself: write 10 pages today. Some days everything is great, the pages are done by lunch, and I can even write more after lunch. Other days, I give up around dinner and feel grateful if anything I wrote that day is usable the next day.

I've been known to write an elaborate synopsis—a really, really good one that would make an excellent book—and then write a book that bears no resemblance to that synopsis at all. Some books fall into place very early, others . . . don't. But I have to make an effort every day.

Deadlines bring motivation, but also stress, which makes writing a lot less fun. The quickest I've ever written a book was two and a half months, but the longest book took over nine months. Unfortunately, books don't tell you ahead of time how long it will take them to get in order.

Putman: What are the challenges of writing books in a series, as you have done? How do you keep

things fresh?

Linden: There's more than one kind of series! My first series was just a family, two brothers and a sister (the Reece Family series). That provided characters and relationships and the freedom to develop them over three books instead of just one, but otherwise no story demands. My second series (The Bow Street Agents) was about three spies who worked together, but the stories were completely separate. I loved writing those, because they shared a premise but not much else.

My last series (The Truth About the Duke) was the hardest. Not only was it a family (three brothers), the stories took place in quick order—in fact, the first two books are almost concurrent—and there was an overarching plot that I couldn't unwind until the third book. I was so afraid of writing the same thing, because all three books were about the same set of circumstances. I made the three brothers very different, and gave them very different heroines to help distinguish the books.

To help keep things fresh from book to book—whether part of a series or not—I stop writing at times and ask myself, what's the least likely thing to happen here? What have I never put in a book before? And then I write that into the story. If you surprise yourself, you're bound to surprise at least some of your readers.

Putman: You have stories in *The Mammoth Book of Regency Romance* and *Once Upon a Ballroom*, another e-book

anthology. How did those projects come about? Do you have any other digital-only projects in the works?

Linden: The *Mammoth Book* invited me. No sweat beaded my brow getting that one! *Once Upon a Ballroom* was much more work, but also much more fun. Maya Rodale came up with the idea and Katharine Ashe, Miranda Neville, and I were instantly sold on it. It was meant to be a fun diversion, very short stories we could write quickly and then use as a group promotion for our next novels, which were all coming out within a few months. We did everything ourselves except the copyediting, and found it really rewarding.

In fact, we're working on another collection for this summer, this time full-length novellas all set at the same country house wedding, called *At the Duke's Wedding*. Maya and I hatched the idea years ago but couldn't sell it, so we've been looking forward to it for a long time. Thanks to digital publishing, no good idea has to be left collecting dust under the bed.

Putman: What sort of promo do you do?

Linden: Promo is a tricky subject; everyone feels obliged to do it, but no one seems to know exactly how to get a good return on the investment. And to be fair, I think successful promotion is not a fixed target, but something that changes as the market (and the world) changes. I try to do things that are fun for me, because time spent on promo is time

not spent on writing or real life, and I like real life and writing far more than I like doing promo.

I focus on things that (hopefully) tempt people to read a sample of my writing: short stories, deleted scenes, blog posts with brief excerpts, book giveaways. My hope is to catch someone's interest with my actual product, like a bakery handing out free cookies to tempt you to come back for bread and cake instead of just hoping you hear their radio ads.

For bigger promotion, I try to work with my publisher as much as possible. Not only do they have a lot more experience and knowledge about successful promotion, they like thinking about it and they have a broader reach than I have.

Putman: Any other genres you'd like to try? What's next for you?

Linden: I really want to write a contemporary romance. Sometimes it feels like I have to consciously make myself write "historically," and I think it's good to change things up from time to time. It would also allow me to write about my beloved Red Sox. The heroine will be a Yankee fan initially, while the hero will be a Boston fan, and he'll have her singing "Sweet Caroline" by the end (the unofficial Boston Red Sox song). And now that I have teenagers of my own, I'd also love to do a young adult or new adult book, so they could finally read something I wrote without either of us being freaked out about it.

But I still love writing historicals, and my next three books will be another loose-knit series set

in 1820s England. I actually intended the first book to be a stand-alone story, but then the heroine had a friend, and the friend had a sister . . . So it will be three books about three very independent-minded young ladies who are passionate followers of an underground erotic publication that leads to more than one scandal. It's been a lot of fun to write, and, strangely, so have the erotic stories. I like to think of them as Fanny Hill's letters to Penthouse Forum. The first book is called *Love and Other Scandals*, out in August 2013.

Putman: Sounds like you learned something while writing those erotic stories. Any advice to others on how to write them?

Linden: I'm not sure what advice I could give, unless someone is interested in writing very old-fashioned erotica. My stories are supposed to be like the 1820s equivalent of *50 Shades of Grey*, providing quite an education for well-bred young ladies but still a product of their time. The one thing I learned from reading 19th century erotica is euphemism, as wild and extravagant as you can imagine. There was no such thing as "too much purple prose" for those 18th and 19th century sex writers.

Editor's note: Caroline Linden's website is <http://www.caroline.linden.com>.



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MARKETING INSIDER

BY JENNIFER FUSCO

Not very long ago, I spoke to the Long Island Romance Writers (LIRW), a great group who are very interested in marketing. During my presentation, we discussed press kits, what goes in them, and who they should be sent to. I rattled off the list like I always do: author bio (long and short), author photo, cover flat, business card, endorsements from other authors and reviews, if you have them, and your press release. As soon as I finished, hands flew in the air. One of the members said, “I have press kit materials available for download on my website, but I don’t think anyone’s ever used them.”

That got me thinking.

The LIRW member was probably right. No one had used the press materials she spent time and money creating. Then, I asked a few of my own chapter mates and got the same answers. Yes, it was all up there—author bio (long and short), author photo, cover flat, endorsements from other authors, reviews, and the press release—but never downloaded.

Why? My best guess: Most authors aren’t taught how to attract the press. Therefore, I’m using this column to put together a cheat sheet for how it’s done. And, I’ll prove to you this method works by using

RWA member Kourtney Heintz and the press coverage she received for her book *The Six Train to Wisconsin* as my example.

Step One: Create a Hook

Just as you would create a hook for a query letter or pitch, you need one for your press release, especially if you are soliciting a feature story. Ask yourself, “Why would anyone care?” Your answer, the hook. In Heintz’s case, she used her contest results to create her hook: “Author jumps from small town Connecticut to Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award semifinalist.”

Step Two: Start Small

Your local hometown paper is your best friend. Start there first, as most local papers like stories about residents who are newsworthy. Generally, their contact information is easy to find. If it’s not printed in the paper, then it is usually listed online. Heintz sent her press release into the *Waterbury Republican*, hoping for a mention in their “Book Briefs” column.

In response, she got a photo of her book cover and a nice mention in

the paper. But it didn’t stop there. They followed up with a short article on her called “Hot Wolcott Author Makes Appearances at Waterbury Venues.” Then, she received a call from an award-winning reporter to schedule an interview. Heintz was given a full-page feature and her photo was placed on the cover of the Accent/Women section. Her article was uploaded to the Associated Press (AP), where it was then run in the *Long Island Newsday*. And, it didn’t stop there. It also was picked up and published in *The Republic*, in Columbus, IN.

Step Three: Solicit Everything Free

Most regional newspapers and arts and entertainment sites have a section online for readers to submit stories, events, and press releases. Take advantage of these opportunities and upload like mad! Heintz uploaded her press release to *The Hartford Courant*.

Step Four: Branch Out Past Newspapers

Once your story runs locally and regionally, it’s time to take it to other

media sources. Radio, podcasts, and daytime television are your next step. E-mail your press release with links to where your articles have run online and in the newspaper; include copies of all the press you have received. By attaching links to past coverage, you are showing the media that you have a story people are interested in. No piece of media coverage is too small. Using this approach, Heintz was featured on WTNH's *CT Style*, a local daytime news show.

She also snared a radio interview on Everything Internet 660AM Dallas/Decatur with Ed Frazier and Lisa McKibben to talk about her book.

The above example was Heintz's approach to earned media (if someone else distributes it for you, like the Associated Press, then it's earned media). If you pay to have something distributed, then it's paid media. Earned media takes a good story, perseverance, and a great deal of luck.

The last step is always national media coverage with solicitation of national newspapers like *USA Today* and morning shows like *Good Morning America*. Now, a little birdie told me Heintz is working on these, and I'll let you know how it goes.

As for the rest of us, while a press kit hosted on your website is nice to have, it's passive. Don't be afraid to actively solicit your local newspaper and see what happens. Press releases are easy to write. If you've never written a press release, please remember to write it in third person. Always include "For

Immediate Release" at the top of the page—this lets the newspaper know they can proceed with the story. List all of your contact information, including your address and phone number, as well as links to your social media profiles. Finally, make sure you call yourself by your last

name. In Kourtney Heintz's case, she is referred to as Heintz, not Ms. Heintz or Kourtney.

So, LIRW, since it was you who got me thinking, you're on the hook for pursuing some earned media and letting us know your results. Good luck and go get 'em!

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San Diego, CA, July 13–16, 2016

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Contests

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August Contests

**Heartbeat 2013

Sponsor: Heart of Louisiana

Fee: \$10

Deadline: Aug. 2, 2013

Entry: three pages max, synopsis
and the first 4,000 words; electronic
submission only.

Judges: published and unpublished
authors.

FMI, visit <http://www.heartla.com>,
or send questions to
nancy@nancysbrandt.com.

The Golden Palm

Sponsor: Florida Romance Writers

Fee: \$20–30

Deadline: Aug. 15, 2013

Entry: maximum 25 pages;
electronic submission only.

Final judges: acquiring editors and
agents (see website for details).

FMI, visit <http://www.frwriters.org>.

The Golden Pen

Sponsor: The Golden Network

Fees: \$30–40

Deadline: Aug. 15, 2013.

Entry: all electronic. Synopsis (not
to exceed 10 pages) plus the first
consecutive pages of the manuscript
in one document (not more than 55
pages total).

Judges: each entry judged by three
judges, including at least one Golden
Heart finalist and one published
author (Golden Heart finalist may
also be the published author).

Final judges: top editors; details
TBD.

FMI, please see <http://thegoldennetwork.com/tgp-about/> or e-mail
the coordinator at goldenpencontest@gmail.com.

**2013 Unpublished Beacon Contest

Sponsor: First Coast Romance
Writers of America

Fee: \$25–35

Deadline: Aug. 31, 2013

Entry: all electronic; first 25 pages
plus optional five-page synopsis of
unpublished manuscript.

Judges: trained and published.

Final judges: editors and agents.

FMI, visit <http://www.firstcoast>

romancewriters.com/.

Heart to Heart Contest

Sponsor: San Francisco Area
Romance Writers

Fee: \$15–20

Deadline: Aug. 31, 2013

Entry: all electronic; the magical
scene in which your hero and
heroine meet for the first time.

Maximum 15 pages (with an
optional one-page setup, unjudged).

Judges: every entrant receives one
PRO or PAN judge.

Final judges: three in each category:
one agent, one print editor, and one
e-publisher editor.

FMI, visit <http://www.sfarwa.net/contests/heart-to-heart-contest> or e-mail
2013heart2heart@gmail.com.

Laurel Wreath Award Contest

Sponsor: Volusia County Romance
Writers

Fee: \$20

Deadline: Aug. 31, 2013

Entry: books must have a copyright
date of 2012.

Judges: booksellers and librarians.

FMI, visit <http://vcrw.net>.

**Show Me the Spark Contest

Sponsor: Heartland Romance

Authors

Fee: \$20–25

Deadline: Aug. 31, 2013

Entry: electronic entry only. First chapter (including prologue); maximum of 3,500 words.

Judges: published authors and trained judges.

Final judges: TBA.

FMI, complete details and rules see <http://www.heartlandromanceauthors.org>.

***Show Me Your Covers**

Sponsor: Sunshine State Romance Authors

Fee: \$10

Deadline: Aug. 31, 2013

Entry: electronic submission of romance novel covers with an original copyright date of 2012 or 2013. Covers may be for electronic or traditional format books. See website for submission guidelines.

Judges: trained judges, with final round including professional artists. FMI, visit <http://www.SunshineStateRomanceAuthors.com>, or contact Loretta Rogers at cowboygirl44@yahoo.com.

September Contests

****2013 Hot Prospects Contest**

Sponsor: Valley of the Sun Romance Writers

Fee: \$25–30

Deadline: Sept. 1, 2013

Entry: any uncontracted/unpublished work. First 25 pages of manuscript in RTF format, plus a five-page synopsis for a total of not more than 30 pages.

Judges: trained published and unpublished chapter members.

Final judges: agents and editor (two

per category).

FMI, visit <http://valleyofthesunrw.com>. For all questions, e-mail Linda Andrews, VOS Hot Prospects coordinator, at voshotprospectscontest@gmail.com.

****The Four Seasons Contest**

Sponsor: Windy City RWA

Fee: \$25–30

Deadline: Sept. 1, 2013

Entry: first 25 pages; electronic entries only.

Judges: three trained judges in first round. Lowest score dropped.

Final judges: an editor and an agent for each category. Visit our website to view our all-star lineup of final judges!

FMI, contact Sonali Dev at sonalidev.author@yahoo.com. For entry form and rules visit <http://www.windycityrwa.org>.

****The Joyce Henderson Contest**

Sponsor: Southwest Florida Romance Writers

Fee: \$25

Deadline: Sept. 1, 2013

Entry: first 20 pages.

Judges: published and unpublished authors.

Final judges: editors.

FMI, <http://www.swfrw.org> or e-mail contest@swfrw.org.

****Fiction from the Heartland**

Sponsor: Mid-America Romance Authors (MARA)

Fee: \$30

Deadline: Sept. 3, 2013

Entry: electronic entry of prologue/chapter/synopsis not to exceed 35 total page count.

Judges: one trained judge and one PAN author. Extensive comments provided.

Final judges: an editor and an agent. FMI, rules, entry forms, contacts, and listing of judges at <http://www.MARARWA.com>.

****Gateway to the Best 2013**

Sponsor: Missouri Romance Writers of America (MORWA)

Fee: \$20–30

Deadline: Sept. 6, 2013

Entry: electronic entry only. Entry length limited to first 7,000 words; no synopsis.

Judges: published, unpublished, PRO writers.

Final judges: editors.

FMI, visit us at <http://www.morwa.org/gateway> or e-mail morwa_gatewaycoordinator@gmail.com.

****2013 Melody of Love Contest**

Sponsor: Music City Romance Writers

Fee: \$27

Deadline: Sept. 7, 2013

Entry: electronic; first chapter (up to 25 pages) of unpublished novel-length manuscript (40,000-plus) including prologue, if applicable. See website for additional details.

Judges: trained, experienced, published.

Final judges: agents and editors.

FMI, e-mail contest@mcrw.com or visit <http://www.mcrw.com/>.

2013 Kathryn Hayes “We Need a Hero” Contest

Sponsor: Romance Writers of America New York City, Inc.

Fee: \$30

Deadline: Sept. 9, 2013

Entry: a maximum of 20 pages that show your hero in the best light as well as a brief synopsis (two pages maximum, not judged) to set up submission.

Judges: published romance authors.
Final judge: Parisa Zolfaghari,
Gallery/Pocket Books.
FMI, visit <http://www.rwanyc.com/contest.html>.

****2013 Launching a Star Contest**

Sponsor: Spacecoast Authors of
Romance – (Florida STAR)
Fee: \$25–30
Deadline: Sept. 15, 2013
Entry: all electronic submissions. 15
pages maximum (story opening);
optional 1-page unjudged synopsis.
Judges: trained, published and
unpublished.
Final judges: an editor and agent.
FMI, visit [http://www.authors
ofromance.com](http://www.authors
ofromance.com), or e-mail Lorena
Streeter at [contest@authors
ofromance.com](mailto:contest@authors
ofromance.com) for questions not
answered from website information.

October Contests

****The Suzannah**

Sponsor: NOLA STARS
Fee: \$30–35
Deadline: Oct. 1, 2013
Entry: all electronic. Entry should
consist of first 7,200 words and
includes a synopsis.
Judges: three trained first round
judges.
Final judges: all six industry
professional judges (TBA).
Top prize: \$300.
FMI, visit <http://www.nolastars.com>.

****Novels Need Love Too**

Sponsor: Celtic Hearts Romance
Writers
Fee: \$20–25
Deadline: Oct. 10, 2013
FMI, visit [http://www.celtic
hearts.org](http://www.celtic
hearts.org).

Conferences

**August Conferences and
Workshops**

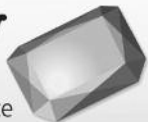
Road to Publishing

Sponsor: Romancing the Lakes
Romance Writers
Location: Mystic Lake Casino Hotel,
Prior Lake, MN
Fee: \$110–125
Date: Aug. 2–4, 2013
Featured speaker: author Connie
Brockway
Conference features: sessions,
editors panel, pitching, writing
contest awards, book fair/signing,
silent auction prizes, photographer
for promo head shots and book
cover artist.
FMI, visit [http://www.romancing
thelakeswriters.com/](http://www.romancing
thelakeswriters.com/) conference
page.

**CRW August Mini-Con: Building
Your Book with Laurie Schnebly
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Sponsor: Colorado Romance Writers
Location: Denver, CO
Fee: \$35–40
Date: Aug. 3, 2013
Speaker: author and renowned
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items, continental breakfast and
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FMI, visit [http://crw-rwa.ning.com
/page/2013-aug-minicon](http://crw-rwa.ning.com
/page/2013-aug-minicon), or e-mail
event chair Lori Corsentino at

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Sponsor: Northeast Ohio RWA
(NEORWA)

Location: Crowne Plaza Airport
Hotel, Middleburg Heights, OH
Fee: \$45–55

Date: Aug. 10, 2013

Workshop features: learn to write
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cues for POV and non-POV
characters and how to write them
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and lunch included.

FMI, please see <http://www.neorwa.com>, or e-mail event chair MJ Esber
at mjesber17@gmail.com.

**September Conferences and
Workshops**

Annual CTRWA Fiction Fest

Sponsor: Connecticut Romance
Writers of America

Location: Hilton Mystic, Mystic, CT
Fee: \$115–155

Date: Sept. 21, 2013

Keynote: *NYT* best-selling author
Roxanne St. Claire

Features: private agent/editor pitch
appointments, double workshop
from Jim Azevedo of Smashwords,
exciting raffle, workshops on craft,
industry and the writer's life,
networking.

FMI, e-mail ctfictionfest@gmail.com
or visit <http://www.ctrwa.org>.

Montana Writers Conference

Sponsor: Montana RWA

Location: Billings Hotel and
Convention Center, Billings, MT
Fee: \$130–215

Date: Sept. 27–29, 2013

Keynote speaker: Debra Holland.

Conference features: workshops,
book signing, warm Montana
welcome and waterslides! At least
one editor will be accepting pitches.

FMI, visit <http://montanaromancewriters.blogspot.com/p/2012-montana-writers-conference.html> or
contact Casey Dawes at
Casey@Stories-About-Love.com.

Fall Harvest Workshop

Sponsor: Midwest Fiction Writers

Location: Ramada Inn MOA,
Bloomington, MN

Fee: \$120

Date: Sept. 28, 2013

Presenter: Jessica Brody. Topic:
“Save the Cat for Novelists.”

Features: all-day workshop plus
book signing event.

FMI, visit <http://www.midwestfiction.com>.

**October Conferences and
Workshops**

**2013 Moonlight & Magnolias
Conference: Sirens of the South**

Sponsor: Georgia Romance Writers
(GRW)

Location: Atlanta Hilton Northeast,
Norcross, GA

Fee: \$129.99–149.99

Date: Oct. 4–5, 2013

Featured speaker: Deborah Smith
Conference features: book signing;
critique roundtable; pitch workshop;
editor and agent appointments;
workshops; basket raffle for literacy;
critique raffle; Maggie Award of
Excellence banquet and dance.

FMI, e-mail Terry Poca, vice
president, Moonlight & Magnolias
2013, Georgia Romance Writers, at

grw.vp.mm2013@gmail.com. Visit
the GRW website for links to
conference and hotel registration:
<http://www.georgiaromancewriters.org/mm-conference/>.

2013 Lonestar Conference

Sponsor: Northwest Houston RWA

Location: Airport Marriott, Houston,
TX

Fee: \$140

Date: Oct. 5, 2013

Presenter: New York literary agent
and author Donald Maass. Topic:
writing 21st century fiction.

Conference features: agents and
editors accepting pitches; author
alley with book signings and sales;
raffles for themed baskets and
auctions; food and refreshments at
the hotel.

FMI, visit <http://nwhrwa.com/writers-events/lonestar-conference/>
or contact Raven Raye at
Raven_Raye@yahoo.com.

**The Emerald City Writers'
Conference**

Sponsor: Greater Seattle Chapter,
RWA

Location: Westin Hotel, Bellevue,
WA

Fee: \$249–299

Date: Oct. 18–20, 2013

Featured speaker: Robyn Carr
Conference features: pitch fest,
agent & editor appointments; 20-
plus workshops on craft, industry,
and writer's life; add-on master class
with Cherry Adair; Jammies and
Jewels Soiree; goody bags, raffle
baskets, door prizes; book fair and
author signing.

FMI, e-mail conference chair
Ronlyn Howe at ecwconferencechair@gmail.com or visit
<http://www.gsrwa.org>.

The Best Little Conference in North Florida

Sponsor: Ancient City Romance Authors (ACRA)
Location: Hampton Inn, St. Augustine Beach, FL
Fee: \$64–69
Date: Oct. 25–26, 2013
Featured speaker: Sharon Sala
Conference features: agent pitches; Friday night reception and treasure hunt; workshops; Pirate Museum field trip; raffle baskets; editor/agent/published author critique raffles; bookstore and book signing. Special door prize: a complete CD set of 2012 RWA Conference workshops.
FMI, e-mail esinclair1@aol.com or kathryn bain@comcast.net or visit <http://www.acrarwa.com>.

Online Workshops

September Online Workshops

Ménages, Polyamory, Swingers . . . Oh, My!

Sponsor: Kiss of Death
Fee: \$15–30
Date: Sept. 1, 2013
Presenter: Dr. Charlie Ferrer.
FMI, <http://www.rwamysterysuspense.org/coffin.html>.

Writing Steamy Sex Scenes: Making Your Readers Beg for More

Sponsor: Kiss of Death
Fee: \$15–30
Date: Sept. 1, 2013
Presenter: Suzanne Rock.
FMI, <http://www.rwamysterysuspense.org/coffin.html>.

Show and Tell, an Interactive Workshop

Sponsor: HCRW (Heart of Carolina RWA)
Fee: \$20–25
Date: Sept. 1–28, 2013
Presenter: Shannon Donnelly.
FMI, <http://heartofcarolina.org/calendar/>.

Tips and Techniques for More Effective Proofreading

Sponsor: From the Heart Romance Writers online chapter
Fee: free–\$25
Date: Sept. 1–28, 2013
Presenter: Ally Broadfield.
FMI, <http://www.fthrw.com/workshops/classes.php> or e-mail workshops@fthrw.com.

Romancing Resistance

Sponsor: Lowcountry RWA
Fee: \$16
Dates: Sept. 1–29, 2013
Presenter: Hillary Hutchinson.
FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

The Writer's Compass: Plotting for the Directionally Challenged

Sponsor: Lowcountry RWA
Fee: \$16
Dates: Sept. 1–29, 2013
Presenter: Fran Colley/Terry Osburn.
FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

Writing Short Stories to Promote Your Novels

Sponsor: Lowcountry RWA
Fee: \$16
Dates: Sept. 1–29, 2013
Presenter: Rayne Hall.
FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

Scotland and Ireland vs. the Tudors

Sponsor: Celtic Hearts Romance Writers
Fee: free–\$20
Dates: Sept. 1–30, 2013
Presenter: Sharon Gunn.
FMI, <http://www.celtichearts.org/workshops>.

Book Promotions for Beginners

Sponsor: Outreach International Romance Writers
Fee: \$20–25
Date: Sept. 1–30, 2013
Presenter: Beth Barany.
FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG4>.

Editing Like a Pro

Sponsor: Outreach International Romance Writers
Fee: \$20–25
Date: Sept. 1–30, 2013
Presenter: Pat Hauldren.
FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG3>.

I Used to Hate Writing a Synopsis, but Not Anymore

Sponsor: Outreach International Romance Writers
Fee: \$20–25
Date: Sept. 1–30, 2013
Presenter: Susan Palmquist.
FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG2>.

Peeling Yourself Off the Wall: Dodging the Writer's Block Bullet

Sponsor: Outreach International Romance Writers
Fee: \$20–25
Date: Sept. 1–30, 2013
Presenter: Beth Daniels.
FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG1>.

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Entries accepted
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Bare Bones: Forensics Basics for Writers

Sponsor: Yosemite Romance Writers

Fee: \$10-15

Date: Sept. 2-13, 2013

Presenter: Kerri Nelson.

FMI, <http://www.yosemiteromancewriters.com>.

The Unique Strength of Damaged Heroes

Sponsor: Carolina Romance Writers (CRW)

Fee: \$10-20

Dates: Sept. 2-16, 2013

Presenter: Kris Tualla.

FMI, <http://www.carolinaromancewriters.com/online-workshop-schedule.html>.

Using the Rule of Six for Plotting

Sponsor: Carolina Romance Writers (CRW)

Fee: \$15-25

Dates: Sept. 2-29, 2013

Presenter: Shirley Jump.

FMI, <http://www.carolinaromancewriters.com/online-workshop-schedule.html>.

Keeping the Tension Alive in Romance Without Sex

Sponsor: NEORWA (Northeast Ohio RWA)

Fee: \$15-20

Date: Sept. 2-30, 2013

Presenter: Susan Meier.

FMI, e-mail neorwaonline@gmail.com or visit <http://www.neorwa.com/index.php/Workshops/Workshops>.

Incorporating Humor into Your Writing

Sponsor: Passionate Ink

Fee: \$15-20

Date: Sept. 3-27, 2013

Presenter: Ally Broadfield.

FMI, www.passionateink.org/workshops.

Making Scenes Come Alive

Sponsor: Lowcountry RWA

Fee: \$16

Dates: Sept. 9-30, 2013

Presenter: Dee Lloyd.

FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

The Writer's Primer of Common Errors: Head-hopping and Roaming Body Parts

Sponsor: Florida Romance Writers

Fee: \$20

Date: Sept. 16-29 2013

Presenter: MM Pollard.

FMI, <http://www.frwriters.org/events/online-workshops/>.

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Deadlines are firm. Deadline for the October issue (which will include items with a contest deadline or conference date in November, December, or January or with an online workshop date in December) is August 1. Deadline for the November issue (which will include items with a contest deadline or conference date in December, January, or February or with an online workshop date in January) is September 1. Please follow the formats at the end of the website listings, not in the abbreviated RWR listings. E-mail submissions confirmed by reply. No attachments please. Send to chaptrevents@rwa.org. Thank you!

For RITA, GH, and National Conference information, please contact RWA's main office at 832-717-5200.

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CONTEST WINNERS

The Oklahoma Romance Writers of America are pleased to announce the placements in the 2012 Finally a Bride Contest

Historical/Regency

First Place

Miss Aeronaut and the Rake by Sally Orr

Second Place

The Lost Chord by Suzanne Turner

Third Place

The Letter by Sandra Owens

Mainstream with Romantic Elements

First Place

Misery, Alabama by Susan Sands

Second Place

Love Thy Neighbor by Karen Fleming

Third Place

Laura Takes a Lover by Mary Oldham

Paranormal/Time

Travel/Futuristic

First Place

A Promise Given by Carla Susan Smith

Second Place

Moon Borne by Heather Boey

Third Place

Water Borne by Heather Boey

Romantic Suspense/Single Title

First Place

The Cell by Diane Garner

Second Place

The Other Son by Terri Bolyard

Third Place

Extreme Fear by Pamela Varnado

Young Adult

First Place

The Agreement by Angela N. Blount

Second Place

Fake by Rebecca Sampson

Third Place

The Abolitionists Daughter by Gigi Orlowski

The Yosemite Romance

Writers, Heart of California

Chapter is proud to announce the winners of the 2013 The Smooch "first kiss" writers contest

First Place

The Unseducible Earl by Sheri Humphreys

Second Place

Awakening by Lori Freeland

Third Place

Breeders by Lisa Fenley

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To report your chapter's contest wins in the RWR, please send the list of winners in the body of an e-mail (following the format as seen in the column) to the RWR editor at RWREditor@rwa.org. First through fourth places only.

Dues E-bill

In an effort to save costs and ensure prompt delivery of dues notices, RWA now sends dues renewal notices via e-mail.

- Here's how the process works:
- RWA sends the first dues renewal notice via e-mail.
- If a member doesn't renew after receiving the first notice, then a second notice is sent via e-mail.
- A third notification is sent via the mail to whoever has not renewed by that time.
- A final e-mail reminder is sent five (5) days before the termination date to any member who has not paid.

Have questions or need to update your e-mail address? E-mail RWA at info@rwa.org or call 832-717-5200, Ext. 121.

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ANNOUNCING THE JOYCE HENDERSON CONTEST



Southwest Florida Romance Writers is proud to honor the memory of an incredible woman and author, Joyce Henderson, by renaming our Hold Me! Thrill Me! contest to the **Joyce Henderson Contest**.

A founding member, Joyce served as our president, wrote our bylaws, incorporated our chapter, and mentored new writers. She worked tirelessly for our members and it's only fitting that our writing contest would bear her name and continue her legacy.

For more information, visit us at swfrw.org

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RWR ADVERTISING

Why Advertise in the *RWR*?

The *Romance Writers Report* offers phenomenal exposure for your advertising dollar. Mailed 12 times a year to more than 10,000 romance authors, aspiring writers, editors, agents, publicists and readers, the display-ad rates begin at only \$100. Our readers tell us they anxiously await their monthly *RWR*, read it cover to cover, and then file past issues to reference again and again. If you have something to communicate to the romance-publishing community, you won't find better value for your advertising dollar than the *Romance Writers Report*.

What Are the Ad Prices?

	RWA Members/ Chapters	Non-RWA Members/ Publishers
1/6-page ad (B&W)	\$100	\$150
1/3-page ad (B&W)	\$200	\$300
1/2-page ad (B&W)	\$300	\$450
full-page ad (B&W)	\$550	\$775
inside cover (full color)	\$750	\$900
back cover (full color)	\$850	\$1,300

Classified Ads:

30 words or less.....	\$25
each additional word over 30 words	50¢
a box around your ad.....	\$10

* RWA members advertising for a company/publisher will pay the non-member rate.

How Do I Reserve an Ad?

1) Reservation & payment deadlines are as follows:

To advertise in the... Reserve ad space by ... Have materials in the
RWA Office by...

January <i>RWR</i>	November 4	November 10
February <i>RWR</i>	December 3	December 7
March <i>RWR</i>	January 4	January 10
April <i>RWR</i>	February 4	February 8
May <i>RWR</i>	March 4	March 8
June <i>RWR</i>	April 5	April 11
July <i>RWR</i>	May 3	May 10
August <i>RWR</i>	June 6	June 12
September <i>RWR</i> ...	July 5	July 11
October <i>RWR</i>	August 7	August 12
November <i>RWR</i> ...	September 5	September 12
December <i>RWR</i> ...	October 4	October 10

Please note that ad space fills quickly, especially cover spots. Reserve ads well in advance of the reservation deadlines.

2) Contact Megan Sloan in the RWA Office to reserve your ad by the deadline(s) above for the issue(s) of your choice – 832-717-5200, Ext. 120; advertising@rwa.org.

Reservations submitted by mail or ads submitted without a prior reservation will not be accepted.

3) E-mail ads to advertising@rwa.org. If your files are larger than 8 MB, please mail a CD or DVD to the RWA office by the deadline (see previous). Submit payment to the RWA Office by the deadline (see previous) at the following address:
Romance Writers of America, attn: *RWR* Ads,
14615 Benfer Road, Houston, TX 77069

4) How should I prepare my ad to get the best results?

To achieve the best results, please send an electronic file created at 300 dpi—at the size it will be used—in an eps, tif, jpeg or high-resolution pdf format. *We do not accept ads created in any other format than as described above (i.e. Microsoft Word, Publisher, etc.). If the ad is formatted incorrectly, you will be asked to send a corrected version.*

Ads should be created to the following specs

Black & White:

1/6-page:2 1/8 inches X 4 1/4 inches
1/3-page vertical:2 1/8 inches X 9 inches
1/3-page horizontal:7 inches X 3 inches
1/3-page square box:4 1/2 inches X 4 1/4 inches
1/2-page vertical:3 1/2 inches X 9 inches
1/2-page horizontal:7 inches X 4 1/4 inches
full page:7 inches X 9 inches

Full Color:

inside front and back covers:7 inches X 9 inches
back cover:8 1/2 inches X 8 inches

For back cover ad, allow 1/4 inch left, bottom and right for a full-bleed back cover advertisement. The *RWR* reserves three inches on the top of the back cover for mailing information.

The Fine Print

Make all checks payable to RWA.

Advertising in the *RWR* is open to all individuals and firms.

However, all advertising is accepted at the discretion of RWA. Publication of advertising does not constitute an endorsement, and RWA is not liable for any products or services advertised.

Advertising material from anyone against whom an unresolved formal complaint has been filed with the Professional Relations Committee will not be published.

RWA's liability to advertisers is limited to refunds of the advertising fees collected.



ASSOCIATION PURPOSE *and* ETHICS

RWA Bylaws, Article 2, Purposes and Limitations

The corporation is hereby organized for the following purposes:

- To advance the professional interests of career-focused romance writers through networking and advocacy: means for such advancement include, but are not limited to, professional education, publications, contests and awards, and an annual conference; and
- To carry on such other activities as are permissible for Texas nonprofit corporations exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as the same may be amended or supplemented (“IRC”).

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, RWA shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under IRC Section 501(c)(6) or by a nonprofit corporation formed under the Texas Business Organizations Code, as the same may be amended or supplemented (the “Act”).

Code of Ethics

The Romance Writers of America® (RWA) Code of Ethics serves as a code of professional conduct for RWA members. It is designed to cause RWA members to exhibit integrity, honesty, professionalism, and other good professional practices, thereby enhancing the romance writing profession.

- RWA members strive for excellence and integrity in the profession of romance writing.
- RWA members strive to treat fellow members, RWA staff, and others with respect.
- RWA members observe and adhere to all of RWA’s Bylaws, policies and other rules.

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RWA’s Operating Values

External Values

- Romance writers have the right to reasonable remuneration and preservation of authorial and intellectual property rights.
- Literacy is individually and culturally vital.
- Storytelling is fundamental to human experience: romance fiction explores issues of universal and eternal human interest.
- United, romance writers are a powerful community.

Internal Values

- RWA belongs to its members.
- RWA fosters an environment of creative and professional growth.
- RWA thrives through the free exchange of ideas, knowledge, and diverse career experiences.

2012-13 BOARD of DIRECTORS

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aRWA was founded in 1980
in Houston, Texas.

Founder:
Vivian Stephens

Co-Founders:
Rita Clay Estrada,
Rita Gallagher, Parris Afton Bonds,
Sondra Stanford, Peggy Cleaves

RWA Headquarters:
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Executive Director
14615 Benfer Rd.
Houston, TX 77069
(832) 717-5200 Phone
(832) 717-5201 Fax
e-mail:
allison.kelley@rwa.org
website:
www.rwa.org

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2007-08
Diane Pershing
2008-09
Michelle Monkou
2009-10
Dorien Kelly
2010-11
Linda Winstead Jones
2011-12

Contact RWA

Send letters for any Board member addressed
to their attention to the RWA Office:

Romance Writers of America
14615 Benfer Rd.
Houston, TX 77069

For information on becoming a member of
RWA, or to inquire about member benefits,
please call the RWA Office at (832) 717-5200,
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ADVERTISE *in the* FALL ISSUE of *ROMANCE SELLS* and EXPAND *Your* READERSHIP

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RWA members with a romance novel or novella may advertise in *Romance Sells*. This includes authors with self-published works.

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WHAT IS ROMANCE SELLS?

Sponsored by Romance Writers of America, *Romance Sells* is a 5.5" x 8.5" quarterly publication dedicated to promoting upcoming and newly published romance titles to approximately 6,300 booksellers and librarians across the nation who use this publication to assist in their purchasing, sales, and reference tasks.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO ADVERTISE?

Do you have a title releasing this fall, winter or even early spring? Now is the time to advertise. Booksellers and librarians will pre-order titles three to six months prior to their release.

HOW DO I ADVERTISE IN ROMANCE SELLS?

The process is simple. Choose from one of three design options for your greyscale, full page ad. Provide your book cover or publicity photo and 250-word copy that includes a synopsis and other pertinent information to your book release. You'll receive a PDF proof to review and approve. Is your cover art not available yet? Don't worry. Provided your art can be sent by August 9, it can be dropped in just prior to the publication being sent to the printer.

HOW MUCH IS EACH AD?

Each full-page ad costs \$200. If you run more than one ad in a single issue, receive a 10% discount.

DEADLINE

Register by Wednesday, July 24

Fall issue releases September 2

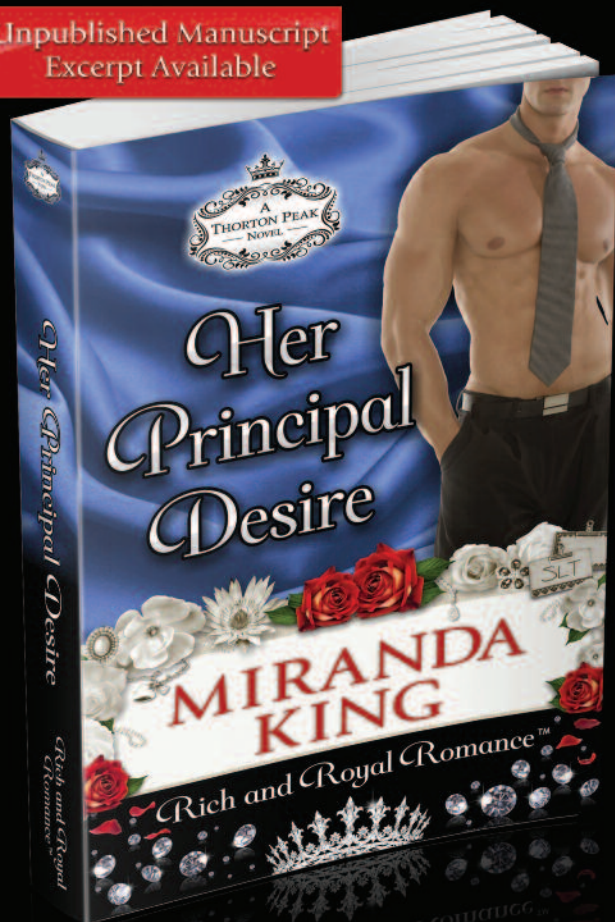
To register, go to www.corncreative.com.

**Contact Marti Corn
at 281-367-0800
or marti@corncreative.com
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Her Principal Desire

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Thanks to an anonymous benefactor, Samantha Alexander rises from overworked cleaning girl to successful college student. The hitch: Samantha can never know the man who's responsible for changing her life. Her benefactor—she's nicknamed "Granddaddy Warbucks"—communicates with her only through his principal advisor, Jackson Smith.

Jackson takes his role far too seriously. Soon Samantha finds this overprotective, broad-shouldered hunk interfering in her personal life. And the opinionated man butts into everything—from her Hollywood dreams to the search for her estranged mom.

...and His Sassy Little Thing

Samantha doesn't need Jackson—though the brooding man thinks she does—nor his advice, especially about Mark Hunter, the new man in her life. Jackson stands firm: Stay away from Mark.

Although there's no reason for Jackson to interfere—Mark is everything she's imagined in a Prince Charming. Besides, the nearly-too-perfect Jackson's not for her, even if she secretly covets being his "Sassy Little Thing."

But when Samantha discovers Jackson protects more than the true identity of Granddaddy Warbucks, she has to decide who is her real Prince Charming: Mark or Jackson?

www.MirandaKing.com
miranda@mirandaking.com



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