

The Writers Network News, July 2017

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The Writers Network News
No Rules; Just Write!
Editor: Bobbie Christmas

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Meet Fellow Writers

Do you live in or visit metro Atlanta? Sign up for notices of local (but sporadic) meetings today! Send your name and e-mail address to [Bobbie@zebraeditor.com](mailto:Bobbie@zebraeditor.com).

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CHANGING YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS? HOW TO REMAIN A SUBSCRIBER

If your address changes, you must sign up again with your new address. We cannot change your address for you, because of our double-opt-in, no-spam policy. Go to www.zebraeditor.com, click on the yellow box, and sign up with your new address.

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Some links in this newsletter are shortened with help from [www.tinyurl.com](http://www.tinyurl.com), a free service that converts long links to short ones.

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Writer's Quote of the Month

"When you publish a book, it's the world's book. The world edits it."
~Philip Roth

From Wikipedia: "Roth is one of the most awarded American writers of his generation. His books have twice received the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle award, and three times the PEN/Faulkner Award. He received a Pulitzer Prize for his 1997 novel *American Pastoral*.... The *Human Stain* (2000), another Zuckerman novel, was awarded the United Kingdom's WH Smith Literary Award for the best book of the year. In 2001, in Prague, Roth received the inaugural Franz Kafka Prize."

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One: From the editor's desk: Social Media Ponderings

Dear Fellow Writers:

Today I'm thinking about social media and all its ramifications. Like all other writers, I bemoan the poor writing and lack of editing we all see on social media, so I won't even go into that demoralizing subject. Instead I'm thinking about other implications of social media.

Writers are told that social media will help us build a platform—a term used to refer to having a following—so that more people will be interested in us and therefore buy our books. Books have been written about how to build a platform, and I'm not an expert on the subject, but I can say that from my experience, it's not easy. I have both a personal and a business Facebook page, a Twitter account, and membership in LinkedIn, Referral Key, and several other networking sites, yet I don't have a following that would raise envy or even eyebrows.

My sister's grandson by marriage, on the other hand, has a gigantic following on Facebook. He has appeared as a contestant on several reality shows, and it doesn't hurt that he's drop dead handsome. He has a shtick as an openly gay, good-looking, and humorous character, which sets him apart from the crowd. A shtick is a special attribute, trait, or talent, and it's what we writers need, if we want to gain a following. What of the dull folks like me who plod along day to day and have only cute photos of our dogs to post on Facebook?

Besides Facebook and other social sites, blogging is another form of social media, and for years we writers have been told we should have blogs that draw readers in. I have blogs, but I can't say that anything I've put into a blog entry has sold a single book. Instead I write blogs because I'm a writer, and writers write. One of my blogs is the result of my having too many stories to put into my relationship memoir that covers dozens of funny, bad, or frightful experiences in my dating life, since I've been single and dating for most of my adult life. My book was getting too long, and no publisher wants a book that's too expensive to publish, so I started a blog and put some of the leftovers and

shorter pieces in the blog. The blog might build interest in my book, too, should the book ever get published, if I can drive more people to my blog. You can check it out at <http://neuroticastories.blogspot.com/>.

I also have a blog for writers called Write In Style. (See <http://bobbiechristmas.blogspot.com/>) On it I post questions people have asked me, along with my answers, writing and editing tips, articles, and other things of interest to writers. The purpose of that blog is simply to help fellow writers.

Both my blogs suffer from less-than-industrious attention from me. I have so many other duties and obligations that I don't add to my blogs as regularly as I should. I'd rather spend time writing my books.

What have your experiences been with social media? Have you learned any tips that will help fellow writers get attention and sell more books through social media? Send your tips to me, and I'll share them with fellow members of The Writers Network.

Yours in writing,  
Bobbie Christmas [Bobbie@zebraeditor.com](mailto:Bobbie@zebraeditor.com) or [bzebra@aol.com](mailto:bzebra@aol.com)  
Author of two editions of WRITE IN STYLE, owner of Zebra Communications, director of The Writers Network, and coordinator of the Florida Writers Association Editors Helping Writers service

If someone forwarded this newsletter to you, please sign up to get your own copy. Simply go to [www.zebraeditor.com](http://www.zebraeditor.com), click on Free Newsletter, and follow the prompts. I never share your address or send out spam.

Two: Ask the Book Doctor about E-Publishing and Copyrights

By Bobbie Christmas

Q: I have a couple of questions about e-books, as I've had two responses to queries from e-book publishers.

1. Should my manuscript be copyrighted before I send the whole thing to anyone?
2. If I publish the e-book version, is it okay to continue sending out queries to other publishers and agents in hopes of selling the printed version?

A: First a word of warning. Many e-book publishers are, in essence, purveyors of self-publishing. Unethical e-book publishers will show interest in a book simply to lure writers into paying for some or all of the expenses of self-publishing. Some e-book publishers will accept almost any book in almost any form and publish it as an e-book because it costs them next to nothing to put a sales button on their websites and allow people to download an electronic version you supply. If you do not receive an advance and/or if you pay the e-book publisher any fee for design or format, it's considered self-publishing. For those reasons be alert and careful and know what you want before you go into any agreement with an e-book publisher. For my first e-book, for example, I made sure my e-book publisher would allow me to use more than its website to sell my e-book, and I'm glad I did. Sales through the publisher's website fell to zero after only a few months, yet over the years I've continued to sell the same book through my own website, and I don't have to give the e-publisher a commission on those sales.

As to the issue of copyrights, according to current copyright law, you own the rights to the work simply for having written it. You don't have to register the copyright, but you may choose to do so. As the copyright office will tell you, however, you must register the copyright only on the very final version of the book. In the meantime you can simply put a statement on the e-book that says, "Contents copyright 2017, (your name)," or you can use the copyright symbol, the date, and your name without officially registering the copyright.

In addition, if you send a manuscript to an agent or publisher, do not put a copyright statement or mark on it, because it reveals a lack of professionalism. Publishers know almost every book will need changes before it is finalized, and traditional publishers will register the copyright in your name right before the book goes to press, after all changes are made. If you send your manuscript to an e-publisher in its final format or to a printer who will print the book for you, you may add a copyright statement then, and you may even want to register the copyright, if it makes you feel more comfortable. To register your copyright immediately before a self-published book goes to press, see <http://www.copyright.gov/register/literary.html>.

As for the second question, it's ethically okay to continue seeking a traditional publisher before you have sold any rights to an e-publisher, but publishing the book in e-book form may not be wise if you hope to sell to a traditional publisher as well. Publishers usually prefer to buy first rights, and if the book has been published (a word that means making something public knowledge) in any form, as an e-book, audiobook, print-on-demand book, or even on a website, the first rights are no longer available for sale. In other words, if an e-publisher produces your book, you no longer have the first rights to sell to a traditional publisher.

Both these issues illustrate why writers should know their goals before they make decisions about publishing. If you have no intention of selling the book to a traditional publisher and you want to get the book out to the public as soon as possible, self-publishing and e-publishing can be excellent options. If you want to sell the book to a traditional publisher at any point, however, it is not wise to self-publish or even allow an e-publisher to produce the book first.

Bobbie Christmas, book editor, author of Write In Style: Use Your Computer to Improve Your Writing, and owner of Zebra Communications, will answer your questions, too. Send them to [Bobbie@zebraeditor.com](mailto:Bobbie@zebraeditor.com). Read more "Ask the Book Doctor" questions and answers at [www.zebraeditor.com](http://www.zebraeditor.com). For much more information on these subjects and hundreds of others of vital importance to writers, order PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS, a Book Doctor's Desk Reference Book at <http://tinyurl.com/4ptjnr>.

Bobbie Christmas's award-winning second edition of WRITE IN STYLE: How to Use Your Computer to Improve Your Writing is available at <http://tinyurl.com/pnq5y5s>.

Three: Subjects of interest to writers

WHY EDITING IS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS

I belong to BookBub, a service that sends me bargains on Kindle versions of books every day. I've bought and downloaded so many books I could seclude myself and read without sleeping or eating for the next ten years. What I don't buy, however, are books that obviously lack editing, and sometimes I can tell simply by the book description, often written by the author. Here's a book I will not buy. Read the description and see if you can tell why I made my decision to pass this one up, despite its high ratings on Goodreads.

Safe with Me  
By K.L. Slater

Years ago, Carla ruined Anna's life. Now, Anna is presented with a unique opportunity to enact her revenge. But will her obsession with Carla lead to the perfect plan — or a perfect disaster? A suspenseful read with over 1,400 five-star ratings on Goodreads!

Did you catch it? The correct phrase is "to exact revenge," not "to enact revenge." The transitive verb "exact" means "to obtain something" or "to inflict something as suffering." If the author cannot produce a well-edited blurb, surely her book lacks editing as well. I wonder how many other knowledgeable people also refused to pay for this potentially unedited book.

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ACCEPTING PAGES FILES FROM MAC COMPUTERS

When I began my editing business in 1992, I accepted only printed manuscripts and edited them with a red pen. Once the Internet became widely used, I could accept Word files and edit them using Track Changes. I am now able to accept files created in the Mac program called Pages, which also has Track Changes. As always, clients have three choices: electronic-file editing (line editing of the file using Track Changes), hybrid editing (line editing of the file using Track Changes plus a detailed report on all suggested changes, creative writing tips, and more), or hard-copy editing (line editing of the printed manuscript plus a detailed report on all suggested changes, creative writing tips, and more).

I'm in the process of changing my website to indicate that I can accept files in Pages, too, but if you see a message that says I accept only Word files, ignore it, and let's get your Mac-based or PC-based manuscript edited and ready for publication together. (www.zebraeditor.com)

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MAN BOOKER PRIZE WINNER ANNOUNCED

David Grossman, an Israeli writer who writes in Hebrew, and translator Jessica Cohen won the 2017 Man Booker International Prize for Cohen's translation Grossman's novel *A Horse Walks Into a Bar*. The annual prize awards both the translator and writer £25,000 for a novel in translation published in the previous year in the United Kingdom.

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SAVE THOUSANDS ON EDITING

Let's face it: editing is costly, because editors must charge for their time and expertise. What if an editor put all her time and expertise into a book that allowed you to edit your own book? You could save thousands of dollars using such a book. *PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS*, A Book Doctor's Desk Reference, is that book. In fact it's the resource that many book editors use.

PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS covers all you need to revise and edit fiction and nonfiction. Get information on grammar, punctuation, word choices, creative writing, plot, pace, characterization, point of view, dialogue, Chicago style, format, and hundreds of other subjects.

Order *PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS* today at <http://tinyurl.com/4ptjnr>.

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NEW POET LAUREATE APPOINTED

The Library of Congress has named Tracy K. Smith its new poet laureate, the nation's highest honor in that field. With the appointment, Ms. Smith will take on a role held by some of the country's most revered poets.

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BOBBIE'S BLOGS

Neurotica: Stories of Love, Lust, and Letting Go—If you like relationship stories, I've got a ton of them. Some are funny, some a little sexy, and all true. I reveal some of my stories at <http://neuroticastories.blogspot.com/>.

In my Write In Style blog, you'll find more tips on creative writing and other subjects. For my latest blog on people who inspired me to become a writer, see <http://bobbiechristmas.blogspot.com/>

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VOCABULARY QUIZ

See how you score. See <https://www.dailywritingtips.com/vocabulary-quiz-6-commonly-confused-words/>,

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BECOME MY FRIEND ON FACEBOOK

Follow my adventures, opinions, and observations: <http://www.facebook.com/bobbie.christmas>

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FOLLOW ZEBRA COMMUNICATIONS ON FACEBOOK

Get news, writing-related cartoons, immediate updates, and other good stuff for writers.

Like and follow Zebra Communications at <http://tinyurl.com/7vcxaxu>.

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CMOS ONLINE Q & A

What is the distinction between yeah, yea, and yay? Is each confined to a specific usage?

Read the response to this question as well as many more questions and answers at <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/latest.html>

THE CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE dictates such things and where commas go, when and what to capitalize, when and how to abbreviate words, when to spell out numbers and when to use numerals, and much more. If you write books, you will want to know more about Chicago style or be sure to use an editor intimately familiar with Chicago style.

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WRITE IN STYLE: How to Use Your Computer to Improve Your Writing

My book on creative writing titled WRITE IN STYLE has won seven big awards. Copies are selling fast on Amazon, but please order it here, directly from the publisher: <http://tinyurl.com/zeq6z5g>. Please note that this book is not about grammar. It teaches writers how to find their fresh voice. If you want a book on grammar, order PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS, mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter.

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Four: Contests, Agents, and Markets

SOUNDS TRUE LOOKING FOR SPIRITUAL LITERATURE

Sounds True Acquisitions Department
413 S. Arthur Ave.
Louisville, CO 80027

We strive to be a trusted partner on the spiritual journey offering diverse, in-depth, and life-changing wisdom delivered with beauty, quality, and integrity. To this end, we are happy to consider unsolicited submissions. Although the volume of submissions is such that we cannot offer individual feedback, we are dedicated to giving each person's work a genuine review. We are continually looking for new material in the form of books, spoken-word audio, music, DVDs, and multimedia products.

How to Submit Your Work

Read the guidelines and FAQs on our website.

If you are a literary agent, music artist's representative, or a published author, please send your inquiry to acquisitions@soundstrue.com

If you are not an agent or published author, prepare your proposal for shipment. Be sure to send copies of your work, never originals.

Perform the blessing ritual of your choice (optional).

Mail your submission to the address above.

To see more, including the full book proposal guidelines, see <http://www.soundstrue.com/store/submissions>.

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#### 8TH HOUSE PUBLISHING SEEKS ESOTERICA AND MORE

8th House Publishing publishes exemplary fiction, philosophy, esoterica, and other earnest works. We operate out of Montreal and New York and are direct sellers. What we like at 8th House: modern, radical, enduring, insightful, inventive... Whether it's an essay, a philosophy tract, or a novel, a book of verse, send us a sample of your work (two or three chapters and a full table of contents) along with a query letter to: [submissions@8thHousePublishing.com](mailto:submissions@8thHousePublishing.com)

Please consider the environment. No agent is required, but we request that all submissions be submitted electronically. Contact [editor@8thHousePublishing.com](mailto:editor@8thHousePublishing.com) in cases where this is not possible. For submission guidelines, see <http://www.8thhousepublishing.com/submissions>

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ARBORDALE PUBLISHING WANTS CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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katie@arbordalepublishing.com
www.arbordalepublishing.com
Contact: Katie Hall.

Our mission is to get children excited about science and math through fun-to-read picture book stories. We are primarily looking for fiction manuscripts with non-fiction facts woven into the story, although we will also consider some nonfiction stories. In every manuscript we look for a "cuddle factor" that will make parents and children want to read it together.

Each of our books includes a two- to six-page, nonfiction "For Creative Minds" section to reinforce the educational component of the book itself. This section will have activities, crafts, or entertaining facts to be shared by the parent, teacher, or other adult. Authors will be asked to provide separate facts that will be incorporated into this section.

We do accept simultaneous submissions.

Manuscripts must be less than 1,000 words and must meet ALL of the following four criteria:

Fun to read – mostly fiction with nonfiction facts woven into the story. We are NOT looking for pure "textbook" nonfiction

National or regional in scope

Must relate to science and math subjects taught at the elementary school level. Any manuscripts with a social studies connection (culture, history, geography) must also contain a math or science component.

Must be marketable through a niche market such as zoo, aquarium, or museum gift shop

To read more, especially what this publisher is NOT looking for, see <https://www.arbordalepublishing.com/Submissions.htm>.

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#### BLACK BOOKS PUBLISHING INC. ACQUIRES CREATIVE BLACK FICTION

We are a small press publisher of fiction and nonfiction titles geared toward distinguished readers, authors, artists, and poets. We firmly believe in quality over quantity and strive to publish only the best.

WANTED: Writers who can combine their PASSION for writing with CREATIVITY and an understanding of HOW TO WRITE, along with understanding, the draft you submit is only the beginning, not the end of the journey to PUBLICATION...

All submissions should be emailed query letters. If we like your idea, we will request the first five chapters of your book, or a few short stories from your collection. If we like those initial submissions we will request the entire book.

Thoroughly edited material has the best chance of acceptance. You don't need to pay someone to edit your material, but if you're serious about your writing, we do recommend it. At a minimum, we suggest you have others read over your work for typos and grammatical errors.

All manuscripts should be in Microsoft Word and should be double spaced with an extra space between each paragraph. THIS EXTRA SPACE SHOULD BE DONE IN MICROSOFT WORD, THROUGH YOUR PARAGRAPH SETTINGS, NOT BY HITTING "ENTER" TWICE. There should be no indentation at the start of each paragraph.

Our novel and short-story submissions periods for query letters is ALWAYS open. Send to: [submissions@blackbookspublishing.com](mailto:submissions@blackbookspublishing.com).

We are also looking for submissions to several anthologies. Check out all our information at <http://blackbookspublishing.com/Submissions.html>.

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NEW AGENT SEEKS MANUSCRIPTS

Becky Lejeune of the Bond Literary Agency is looking for commercial young adult and adult projects in speculative fiction (horror, SFF, and all sub genres), mystery/suspense, thrillers, historical fiction, and general/literary fiction. She likes strong characters and plot-driven stories and is especially on the lookout for projects that are diverse and reflect a fresh voice.

Send your query and first five pages, all in the body of an e-mail (no attachments) to queries@bondliteraryagency.com. Bond Literary Agency is a small, full-service literary agency in the greater metro Denver area. We work with the large houses in New York and mid-size and small publishers all over the country. We represent BOOKS, not screenplays or theatrical plays.

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DAW BOOKS SEARCHING FOR SCI-FI AND FANTASY

Peter Stampfel, Submission Editor  
DAW Books, Inc.  
375 Hudson St.  
New York, NY 10014

DAW accepts unsolicited submissions of science fiction and fantasy novels. The average length of the novels we publish varies, but is almost never fewer than 80,000 words.

Founded in 1971 by veteran paperback editor Donald A. Wollheim, along with his wife, Elsie B. Wollheim, DAW Books was the first publishing company ever devoted exclusively to science fiction and fantasy. Now more than thirty years and more than a thousand titles later, DAW has a well-deserved reputation for discovering and publishing the hottest talents in the industry. Despite its high profile (it is part of Penguin), DAW is still a small, private company, owned exclusively by its publishers, Elizabeth R. Wollheim and Sheila E. Gilbert. Betsy and Sheila are strongly committed to discovering and nurturing new talent and to keeping a personal "family" spirit at DAW—something they feel is all too rare in today's world of international conglomerate publishing.

A literary agent is not required for submission. We will not consider manuscripts that are currently on submission to another publisher, though, unless prior arrangements have been made with a literary agent. It may require three months or more for our editors to review a manuscript. If we take longer than three months to review your manuscript, we no longer require an exclusive submission.

At this time, we do not accept electronic submissions of any kind. Please send us the entire manuscript with a cover letter. Do not submit handwritten material. The manuscript should be on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper, double-spaced, with at least 1" margins. Please use only one side of the page, number your pages consecutively, and put the title of your novel at the top of each page. Manuscripts should always be unbound. You are entitled to Media Mail rates for literary manuscripts—ask at your local post office.

Very important: Please type your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and manuscript word count in the upper right hand corner of the first page of your manuscript. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your submission, for our correspondence. Additionally, if you would like to be notified when your manuscript has been logged in, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard.

We ask that you send us disposable copies of your manuscript only, which will be recycled in the event they are not found suitable for publication. We regret that we are no longer able to return submitted manuscript copies.

It is not necessary for you to register or copyright your work before publication—it is protected by law as long as it has not been published. When published, we will copyright the book in the author's name and register that copyright with the Library of Congress. Please send manuscripts to the name and address above.

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Do YOU have news for The Writers Network News? Please send it in the body copy, not an attachment, to Bobbie@zebraeditor.com.

Deadline: The 15th of each month.

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Send a copy of this newsletter to all your writing friends. Tell them to join The Writers Network F-R-E-E by visiting www.zebraeditor.com and clicking on Free Newsletter.

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With the exception of Zebra Communications, information in this newsletter is not to be construed as an endorsement. Be sure to research all information and study every stipulation before you enter a competition, pitch or accept an assignment, spend money, or sell your work.

To access past issues of The Writers Network News, click here: http://live.ezine.com/feeds/ezine/886_2.

The Writers Network News: a newsletter for writers everywhere. No Rules; Just Write!

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