

The Writers Network News, October 2018

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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 email address to [Bobbie@zebraeditor.com](mailto:Bobbie@zebraeditor.com).

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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

"I take the view and always have, that if you cannot say what you are going to say in twenty minutes, you ought to go away and write a book about it." —Lord Brabazon

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DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!

If your address changes and our email to you bounces, our system automatically unsubscribes you. If you plan to change your email address, subscribe again with your new address. We cannot add you in or change your address, because of our double-opt-in, no-spam policy. Go to <https://www.zebraeditor.com/> and sign up with your new address.

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ONE: FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK: OUT OF THE CLOSET

Full disclosure: I also posted the following information on my Facebook page, with the exception of the P.S.

Dear Fellow Writers:

At last I'm stepping out of the closet. No, think again. My sexuality has never been in question. I'm revealing a different personal secret that I've kept hidden from clients and subscribers to my blogs and newsletter for years. I've been battling colorectal cancer. I didn't want people to know, though. It was way too personal, and besides, I didn't want clients to think I might die before finishing their editing projects. As a septuagenarian, I grew up in an era when the "C" word meant certain death. Times have changed, I know, but my mindset hadn't completely kept up with the times.

At last I can be vocal about my victory, though, and celebrate. Although no doctor will declare a cancer patient "cured" for at least five years, my oncologist gave me highly encouraging news recently. He said I can finally consider myself cancer free. He announced that my tumor markers are practically nonexistent and my latest CT scan was, in his words, "pristine." Best of all he spouted statistics indicating that if colorectal cancer is going to recur, it usually happens within the first eighteen months after surgery. I have now passed the two-year mark, and he congratulated me and said I am going to be fine. At last I feel that I can be open about my clash with cancer.

Keeping my secret has been depressing. I had to cancel vacation plans, renege on speaking engagements, avoid the public, and stay close to home. I closeted myself and internalized my feelings. Of course my family and a few close friends knew of my challenge, but I told them I didn't want to discuss what I was going through. I didn't want cancer to define my existence. I wanted editing, bowling, laughing, taking water aerobics, giving seminars, cuddling with my dog, and helping fellow writers to define my life, not cancer.

One or two fellow writers outside my circle of very close friends learned of my illness through various means. I asked them to be silent for me. They did. I want to thank them for respecting my wishes. This announcement officially unseals their lips.

I've envied others who openly reported their cancer battles, setbacks, surgeries, and issues. I admired their honesty and upbeat attitudes, but I didn't feel comfortable revealing my own struggles, and I could not muster a cheerful attitude. Frankly I did not want the public to know my challenges with my nether regions.

Anyway, I can exhale now. I feel relieved for the first time in more than two years. I can reveal that surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation left me with a different body. My hips and bladder are weaker, and chronic diarrhea requires that I keep an eye out for restrooms at all times, but I'm here. I'm still kicking. Best of all, the doctor thinks I'll keep kicking for a long time.

I can finally throw open my closet door and release all my anxiety, demons, secrets, and fears. My body will never be the same, but my mind is at last optimistic again. Welcome to Bobbie 2.0!

P.S. I am certainly not revealing this information to get sympathy; I'm accepting only congratulations.

Yours in writing,  
Bobbie Christmas Bobbie@zebraeditor.com or 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 subscription. Simply go to <https://www.zebraeditor.com/> to subscribe to The Writers Network News. My promise: I never share your address or send out spam.  
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## TWO: ASK THE BOOK DOCTOR

### QUOTATIONS, QUOTATION MARKS, DIRECTIONS, AND SHIP NAMES

By Book Doctor Bobbie Christmas

Q: I have two questions. In including a quote from [source redacted] in an article I'm writing, I have these challenges:

1. He was British so his spelling is different from ours in one word in my quote. Should I keep it intact and, if so, do I need to note the difference in some way?
2. The quote has a parenthetical phrase that is irrelevant to my topic. Can I skip the phrase without losing the integrity of the quote?

A: The Chicago Manual of Style lists permissible changes to quotations in section 13.7, which states that obvious typographical errors may be corrected, but "if spelling and punctuation are modernized or altered for clarity, readers must be so informed in a note, in a preface, or elsewhere." It would seem to me, then, that keeping the British spelling would be the wiser way to go. As for eliminating a parenthetical phrase, I don't see the specific issue addressed in CMOS, but if eliminating any portion doesn't change the meaning of the quotation, I see no problem. If it were me, I would quote only the portions relevant to the point I was trying to make.

Q: I can't remember if I place a period after the single quote or before.

A: In American English single quotation marks are used only inside double quotation marks. They never stand alone. In addition, periods almost always, if not always, go inside quotation marks, whether single or double.

Contrary to what might be popular belief, single quotation marks are not to be used for emphasis or irony. They never stand alone except in headlines.

Examples of single and double quotation marks with periods:

Mary said, "John told me, 'I never lie.'"

Example of single quotation marks in headlines:

### AUDIENCE RECEPTION 'MILD,' ACCORDING TO REVIEWER

Q: When are the directions (north, south, east, west) capitalized?

A: Directions are capitalized in Chicago style when they refer to regions. In the following example "north" is simply a direction, not a region, so it is not capitalized: We went north to Virginia. In the following sentence, though, "North" refers to a region, so it is capitalized, but south is a direction, so it is not: She grew up in the North, but she moved farther south to enjoy the warmer weather.

Perhaps the use of the word "the" is a fairly reliable indicator that the word refers to a region, rather than simply a direction.

Here's what my book Purge Your Prose of Problems has to say about the subject: Capitalize directions when used for areas of the country. (He moved to the North for the summer.) Do not capitalize for general directions. (We drove south for four blocks.)

Q: In my book manuscript I quote from 1945 newspaper articles that contain names of oceangoing vessels. The articles did not italicize those names, perhaps because of shortcomings of the presses of that time. Nevertheless, I feel I should italicize the names in my manuscript. Am I correct?

A: Good catch! The newspaper articles did not italicize those names because it apparently was not the newspaper's style to italicize the names of oceangoing vessels. Chicago style, however, which is the style used by book publishers, does indeed italicize the names of specific ships, submarines, airplanes, aircraft, and even artificial satellites. If the name is preceded by an abbreviation such as SS or HMS, however, the abbreviation is not italicized.

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 <https://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 from Amazon at <https://tinyurl.com/y7ppcdkd> or buy it directly from me at <https://tinyurl.com/y7p9xkbb>.  
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### THREE: SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO WRITERS

#### MEMBERS WRITE...

In last month's newsletter I asked subscribers if they categorized themselves as poet, creative nonfiction writer, novelist, or something else. Here are a few answers I received:

Glenda Beall responded, "I once considered myself a poet and published numerous poems and a poetry chapbook. But I really enjoy creative nonfiction and sometimes write short stories. So I don't label myself. I am a multi genre writer who just loves to write and teach."

She also pleased me by saying, "I continue to recommend your books because they are just what my students need as they begin to submit their work."

Thank you, Glenda!

On the same issue Terry Dodd wrote, "I recognize that journaling has been responsible for four of my twelve self-published titles. I am happily journaling now about this wonderful life of mine, with no intention of publishing "A Year in the Life of a Fourscore Ager."

My response: "Thank you for your note, Terry. I went from being someone who wrote journals to someone who was a journalist and back to being someone who writes journals. One activity was more lucrative, but the other was more satisfying."

John Wright wrote, "Am I a writer? I think so, having written in excess of half a million words in writing the Detective Len Morgan series in eight books thus far and working on number nine." He added, "The lack of interest [in my books] at times makes me question whether I'm a writer or a hack. Whatever, I'll continue to write."

Carol Madan, also known as Momma Nature, had an interesting take on my question. "Funny you would ask whether I think of myself as a poet a writer or both. I started writing poetry in high school out of an intense feeling of loneliness and probably depression.... life was tedious and incredibly harsh, in terms of cliques. Writing ameliorated my frustration a great deal." She noted that in her college poetry class, "I stood up to the poetry professor who told me he'd give me an A if I would take two lines off my favorite poem. The last two lines were my favorite," so she settled for a B+. She has also won second place in a poetry contest with the Atlanta Writers Club has been published in several Church Concepts when she lived in Minnesota. "I was just beginning to think of myself as a writer when I got involved with the Minneapolis Writers Workshop," she said, and being the co-director of the MWW annual conference was the highlight of her life in that state. "Once I got to Georgia, I began publishing in various magazines and newspapers. Now I focus on writing a poetry chapbook. I enjoy being active with the Georgia Poetry Society Branch here in Johns Creek and have spoken my words at Phoenix & Dragon [a local store in Atlanta] in its monthly poetry gathering."

BF Oswald revealed that he wrote many poems when he spent a decade in an unhappy marriage, working in the wrong occupation, living on low wages for a family of five, and going to graduate school part-time. Wow! Maybe depression does makes one write more. He went on to say that he classifies himself as a storyteller. "I find 'novelist' is a limited classification because so many of my customers don't seem to understand what is included under that umbrella," he explains. BF Oswald has ten published books and is working on more. To see a list of his books, Google .

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Dotti Hydue checked in about poetry with the following note: "I just finished proofreading a book called IT'S NOT A CRIME TO RHYME." In it the author uses rhyme to rail against free verse. (Doug Offenbacher, RealBooksonPaper.com)

Dotti also commented regarding my More Manuslips example, saying, "It is possible the author's computer's autocorrect function 'corrected' a misspelling of 'abandoned' into 'a bandit.' When I go over text after typing for a while, I sometimes find completely different words from what I thought I had typed. Some examples, 'banana' instead of 'bandana,' and in the previous sentence, 'overtax' instead of 'over text.' Computers will never replace us!"

I answered, "From many other errors in the manuscript as well, I wondered if the author used voice-to-type to write the book. I certainly see my voice-to-text messages getting garbled into things that have nothing to do with what I said. Whatever the cause, though, we're supposed to read our manuscripts and clear up such things before sending them to anyone else, even to an editor. I'm relieved that computers will never replace the human eye."

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My newsletter also mentioned that I think the best storage for our manuscripts is not strictly digital but also as printouts. I'm not a fan of keeping my photos only as digital files either. Jennie Inglis responded, "I feel strongly that while photos may need digital storage, many—not all—need to be kept in printed form. Enjoying photos with others is a shared experience. You pass them around and look at them. Phones and other small-screen devices limit this sharing and do not allow for individual freeform exploration of the medium."

I wrote: "I agree with you. I now print out photo books that cover my trips or simply my year on Facebook and such. I was not good about putting photos in scrapbooks, but I'm a little better about making printed books with photos using services such as Shutterfly and others."

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#### INTERESTED IN JOINING A WRITING PROGRAM?

The Association of Writers and Writing Program's Guide to Writing Programs is a free, searchable database of graduate and undergraduate writing programs in the US and abroad. Each member program listing contains information about faculty, admissions, requirements of study, and tuition and financial aid.

[https://www.awpwriter.org/guide/guide\\_writing\\_programs](https://www.awpwriter.org/guide/guide_writing_programs)

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#### MORE MANUSLIPS

In my Manuslips file I keep a list of errors I find that either tickle my fancy or prove a point about clear writing. I use quite a few manuslips in WRITE IN STYLE too.

Here's the manuslip of the month:

My sister spotted this odd description in the historical novel she's reading:

He crossed his legs and then his arms behind his head.

How many other ways could that sentence have been written that wouldn't unintentionally describe a contortionist?

In the same book she also spotted this obvious typo:

She pushed back her hair and left the room.

Yes, the sentence makes sense, and that's why it takes an editor to spot these things. The intended sentence was this: She pushed back her chair and left the room.

BF Oswald contributed this major slip in a published book he read: A sentence described a character's accident in which he received both head and neck injuries including a broken cervix. [It was probably supposed to be a broken clavicle; few men are born with a cervix, much less one near the head and neck.]

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SAVE \$\$\$ ON EDITING

The sixth edition of PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS is selling quickly. It includes the latest, most important changes in Chicago style that writers and editors should know. It answers vital questions while you write or edit your manuscript. Order here: <https://www.zebraeditor.com/bookstore/>.

Here are some of the issues PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS puts to rest:

Where do the commas belong? Where do they not belong? (page 59)

What's the difference between "which" and "that?" (page 174)

What is a dangling modifier? How can you repair it? (page 66)

What is right, "towards" or "toward?" (page 180)

Which is right, "assure," "insure," or "ensure?" (page 40)

When should you write out a number? When should you use the numeral? (page 128)

Which is correct, T-shirt, tee shirt, or t-shirt? (page 171)

PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS answers these and more than 700 other questions vital to writers and editors.

Order a printed or PDF copy here: <https://www.zebraeditor.com/bookstore/>.

PURGE YOUR PROSE OF PROBLEMS: A Book Doctor's Desk Reference is the same resource that many book editors use.

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PLANNING TO QUOTE A SOURCE? THINK AGAIN!

Although many people may think "fair use" makes it legal to quote only a few words or sentences without getting permission from a source, it is not true. No law or legal precedent allows fair use of copyrighted material without permission. Sources can sue if any of their copyrighted material is quoted, even if the source is cited. Not even scripture is completely in the public domain. Some bibles are still protected by copyright law and cannot be cited without permission.

One of publishing-company clients recently explained to me that KJV allows up to one thousand verses before requiring further permission, while the Mormon bible requires permission for any part, and it is difficult to get authorization. Most bibles want a reference on the copyright page, even if the author attributes the scripture within the body of the manuscript.

Authors' safest bet is to write their own material or paraphrase information, rather than directly quoting a source.

Here's a typical (but hypothetical) quote that might get a writer into legal trouble:

Mary Jones says in her book titled MARY ON MEDITATION, "You must close your eyes and be still. Breathe deeply. Don't worry if your mind wanders at first."

To potentially avoid legal issues you might paraphrase the information this way:

Mary Jones, author of MARY ON MEDITATION, says it is best to relax, keep your eyes closed, be still, take deep breaths, and let your mind wander if it wants to, in the beginning.

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EASY ACCESS TO BOBBIE'S BLOGS

Read creative writing tips as well as some of my personal experiences. Access the Write In Style blog here: <https://www.zebraeditor.com/blog/>

On the other hand:

For my relationship-related blog, see my blog titled "Neurotica: Crazy Stories of Love, Lust, and Letting Go." If you like to read about disastrous dates and ridiculous relationships, I've got a ton of them, and they all happened to me. Some are funny, some are a little sexy, some are sad, and all true. <https://neuroticastories.blogspot.com>.

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WRITERS BLOCK? QUICK SOLUTION!

Carolyn Dube in the latest SPAWN newsletter gives a clever way to think that will unstick your mind in fresh and exciting ways. It works for artists, writers, crafters, and anyone else creating something new. See <https://tinyurl.com/yaxls6dt>.  
The Small Publishers, Artists & Writers Network (SPAWN) provides information, resources and opportunities for anyone involved in or interested in publishing and writing.

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#### HAVE YOU CLAIMED YOUR AMAZON AUTHOR PAGE?

I have claimed mine. As an example, see <https://www.amazon.com/author/bobbiechristmas>

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#### HOW TO FORM A CRITIQUE CIRCLE

Feedback is vital to writers. To get free feedback give free feedback in return, you can form a critique circle. Order my free report on how to find participants and create a critique circle that works like a charm. Simply send me an email and ask for my report on critique circles. [Bobbie@zebraeditor.com](mailto:Bobbie@zebraeditor.com)

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#### MAN WINS BOOKSTORE IN RAFFLE

The Guardian reported that the United Kingdom's newest independent bookseller won his bookshop in a raffle. Paul Morris opened Bookends, in Cardigan, Wales, four years ago. The shop was valued at £30,000, but Morris wanted to give someone else the chance to realize the dream of running a bookshop, so he created a raffle for it. The winner was Ceisjan Van Heerden from the Netherlands. To more details, see <https://tinyurl.com/ybbklnlx>.

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#### TURN YOUR BOOK INTO A KINDLE EBOOK

I haven't tried this myself, but it supposedly is free, results in an ebook you can upload and sell on Amazon, and it might be easy, provided your file is a Microsoft Word 2016 file. See <https://tinyurl.com/y8d6oq5l>.

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Be my friend on Facebook

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

#### FOLLOW ZEBRA COMMUNICATIONS ON FACEBOOK

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

Like and follow Zebra Communications at <https://tinyurl.com/ydyn3pcu>.

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#### CMOS ONLINE Q & A

Someone wrote to The Chicago Manual of Style Online about a change made in the 17th edition of CMOS and asked the following question:

Regarding the update . . . about capitalizing a direct question midsentence: Does it apply to a sentence like this? "With all of X's resources, why [lowercase w] had her cell phone not been fixed?" This type of sentence seems different to me than the examples given in 6.42, but I can't explain why. Does the new rule apply? Should it be "With all of X's resources, Why [uppercase W] had her cell phone not been fixed"?

To get the clear answer to this question and many more based on Chicago style, go to <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/latest.html>.

THE CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE sets the standard in book publishing for issues such as punctuation, capitalization, and much more. If you write fiction or nonfiction books, you will want to know about Chicago style or be sure to use a professional book editor intimately familiar with Chicago style.

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#### LET'S HOPE YOUR BOOK NEVER GETS A REVIEW LIKE THIS ONE

Read what Ron Charles has to say about James Frey's latest book, KATERINA.

<https://wapo.st/2QkOGxp>

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

WRITE IN STYLE teaches writers how to strengthen their writing style and create a fresh voice, one publishers and readers want to read.

Order your copy today at <https://tinyurl.com/y8fp5nym>.

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#### FLORIDA WRITERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Every October FWA puts on one of the best and biggest conferences in the Southeast. I'll be one of many people giving helpful seminars. My subjects are as follows:

What is a Fresh Voice & How Can You Find Yours?

Travel Writing for Fun and (a Little) Profit

Chicago Style: What is It? Does Your Book Comply?

I hope to see you there.

To learn more or to sign see

<https://floridawriters.net/conferences/florida-writers-conference-2018/>

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#### FOUR: CONTESTS, AGENTS, AND MARKETS

##### 51 MAGAZINES THAT PAY \$

Freedom with Writing offers a long list. See <https://tinyurl.com/ya2s8cno>.

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##### A FINE PARENT

Accepting articles for web-based magazine.

"Every month, we take on ONE simple topic that can make us a better person, and a better parent, and we consume it on a weekly basis in small digestible bits. The topic may be something as simple as screaming less at kids. Or more complex like figuring out the secret of happiness and finding ways to apply it in our our lives.

"Each week I will publish one comprehensive, well-researched article in the realm of this topic. The article will be both informational and actionable. How much action you want to take is entirely up to you. Obviously, the more seriously you take it, the more success you will see.

"There are THREE essential things we look for in every article we publish:

1. A powerfully written personal anecdote that connects you with the reader, moves them and engages them in your article
2. A unique list of lessons learnt from your experience that helps them walk away with new ideas, perspectives and excitement to try something new in their own lives
3. A solid backing for your article in the form of references to your favorite parenting/psychology book and/or relevant research

Additionally, the article MUST be written in web-format (well-organized; skimmable; short paragraphs; lists and bullets), be original and not published anywhere else before, include the mandatory "two-minute action plan" (contemplation/reflection questions) and the "long-term action plan" (specific action to take over the next week) sections at the bottom of the article. Please keep these short and to the point, be in the 1,500 – 3,000-word range. I prefer to stick to that range, but will make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

"Articles selected for publication will be paid \$75 via Paypal.

See <https://afineparent.com/write> for complete submission guidelines.

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##### FIRST CALL: THE 2019 ERIC HOFFER BOOK AWARD

Each year, independent publishers release extraordinary books to little or no recognition. The Eric Hoffer Book Award recognizes excellence in publishing. A single registration gives you six ways to win, by genre, press, the Montaigne Medal, the da Vinci Eye, the First Horizon Award, and the Hoffer grand prize. There is a category for every book. (visit [www.HofferAward.com](http://www.HofferAward.com)) E-books and chapbooks also accepted.

\* \$2,500 Grand Prize \* Entrance Fee of \$60 \* Many Categories \*

##### AWARDS/BENEFITS:

- \* \$2,500 GRAND PRIZE (the Eric Hoffer Award for Books)
- \* Winner of the Montaigne Medal for most thought-provoking books
- \* Winner of the da Vinci Eye for best covers
- \* Winner of the First Horizon Award for debut authors
- \* Winner and First Runner-Up awarded for every category
- \* Honorable Mentions for every category
- \* Individual Awards for Micro, Small, and Academic Presses, as well as Self-Published Books
- \* Coverage in The US Review of Books ([www.theUSReview.com](http://www.theUSReview.com)) and on [www.HofferAward.com](http://www.HofferAward.com)
- \* Gold Seal Certificates
- \* Worldwide Exposure

CATEGORIES: Art, Poetry, Chapbook, General Fiction, Commercial Fiction, Children, Middle Reader, Young Adult, Culture, Memoir, Business, Reference, Home, Health, Self-Help/Spiritual, Legacy Fiction, Legacy Nonfiction, E-book Fiction, and E-book Nonfiction.

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##### 2019 AUTUMN HOUSE NONFICTION CONTEST

<https://www.autumnhouse.org/submissions/nonfiction/>

Plan now for the 2019 nonfiction contest for Autumn House. The winner receives publication of a full-length manuscript and \$2,500. The submission period opens January 1, 2019, and closes June 30, 2019. If you have any questions, please check <http://www.autumnhouse.org/faqs/>.

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##### INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHER SEEKS WIDE RANGE OF SUBMISSIONS

With headquarters in London, New York and Sharjah, Austin Macauley Publishers has established itself as an energetic and innovative independent trade publisher. Our publications range from historical romances to celebrity autobiographies; from illustrated children's tales to in-depth technical manuals; from hard-hitting thrillers to meditative poetry. We pride ourselves on our hybrid publishing model, a progressively more popular means by which both new and previously published authors can establish themselves in the increasingly competitive world of books. Expanding on our international success, we will be opening an office in Australia and South Africa in 2018. An office in Vancouver, Canada will follow in 2019. For submission guidelines see <https://www.austinmacauley.com/am-publishers-submissions>.

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Do YOU have news for The Writers Network News? Send it in the body of an email to [Bobbie@zebraeditor.com](mailto:Bobbie@zebraeditor.com) or [bzebra@aol.com](mailto:bzebra@aol.com).

Deadline: 18th of each month.

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<https://www.zebraeditor.com/> and signing up for The Writers Network News.

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