



Write On!

Quarterly e-Zine • Summer 2014

WHAT'S INSIDE?

7 Steps to Becoming a Successful Debut in Women's Fiction
by Carly Watters

The Wild Ride: Building Emotional Punch in Your Novel
by Kellie Coates Gilbert

How to Love Your WIP (Even When You Hate It)
by Erin Bartels

... and more!

EDITORS

FEATURES EDITOR

Erin Bartels is a copywriter by day, a novelist by night, and a wife, mother, seamstress, and tireless ambassador for the state of Michigan in between. Erin is a board member of the Capital City Writers Association and the author of *The Intentional Writer*. You can find her encouraging writers, talking about craft, and sharing beautiful photographs at www.erinbartels.com.

HIGHLIGHTS EDITOR

Jessica Ferguson is the author of *The Last Daughter*, a novella published by The Wild Rose Press. She interviews authors for Southern Writers Magazine and is co-editor of Swamp Lily Review, a Journal of Louisiana Literature and Arts. In her spare time, she plays with her recently retired husband. Jess blogs at www.jessyferguson.blogspot.com.

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Tasha Seegmiller (T + ash + a S + egg + miller) is a high school English teacher in Southern Utah for part of the day, mom to three for the rest, and writes contemporary women's fiction with a dash of magic. She loves owls, runs on Diet Coke, chocolate and cinnamon bears, and a life immersed in words. Tasha can be found at www.tashaseegmiller.blogspot.com.

MANAGING EDITOR

Reese Leyva wrote her first poem at age seven (in a birthday card for her grandmother) and became a narrative addict shortly thereafter, captivated by stories of any form—books, poems, spoken word, film, etc. She's written hundreds of poems, several short films, a novella, a full-length stage play, and an unpublished novel. She's currently working on her second novel while blogging at www.reeseleyva.com.



ABOUT THE WFWA

We began this organization in 2013 with the idea to create a safe, nurturing place for male and female writers of women's fiction. The publishing industry is morphing—with new opportunities and, as yet, unknown futures. The founders of the Women's Fiction Writers Association wanted somewhere to amass and disseminate information to and about our chosen genre.

Defining Women's Fiction has proven as subjective as the types of books we prefer. For that reason, our guiding statement is broad and comprehensive:

An inclusive organization of writers who create stories about a woman's emotional journey.

Our stories may have romance. Or they may not. They could be contemporary. Or historical. But what binds us together is the focus on a woman's emotional journey.

Write on!



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President's Note



Happy summer everyone!

We're coming up on a big milestone for the Women's Fiction Writers Association—September 9 will mark our first birthday.

Some of you were on the Yahoo loop pre-official organization. The founding members were floored when we topped 100 members the very first day WFWA opened to memberships. 200 by the end of the first month. And here we are, not quite 12 months later, and we've grown to over 370 members.

During those early, conceptual days we asked members to give us their wish list for *their* women's fiction organization. Here's a quick review of what you wanted, and where we are so far:

- **WF writing retreat, annual conference** – The first WFWA retreat will be in 2015 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. If you've seen the early announcement, you know that instructor, agent, and WFWA member Donald Maass will present a half-day workshop geared for women's fiction writers. The retreat will also include breakout sessions, networking, and writing time.

- **Mentorship program** – In 2015 we'll take a closer look at the makeup of our membership and, hopefully, be able to launch this program.

- **Critique groups** – A number of the groups from the first pairings are still going strong. New members and members who didn't sign up for the critique groups originally or whose groups may not have meshed, can work with the critique group coordinator for placement.

- **Annual writing challenge** – In January, we held the first WFWA Write-A-Thin, a month-long manuscript writing-rewriting-revising-editing-tweaking-trimming event. The forum was bustling with helpful suggestions, inspiration, and lots of camaraderie.

- **Women's fiction writing contest for published and unpublished writers** – The Rising Star contest for unpublished authors was launched in May and, to our amazement, maxed the entry cap in under 24 hours. We'll be announcing the finalists the first week of August. We hope to be able to launch a contest for published women's fiction next year.

- **Website resources for debut authors, aspiring authors, book club tips, business advice, craft tips, publishing tips** – The Toolbox section on the website includes a wide selection of articles and links. If you haven't already checked out the resources available on the site, please do. And if you have an article that will be helpful to other WFWA members, please use the content submission form and we'll add it to the appropriate Toolbox.

- **Member list** – There are currently two member lists, a public one and the internal list. Many of you have asked about a list that's searchable by location. We're working on that. We're also looking into updating the public directory.

- **Webinars/workshops** – There's been a nice variety of online workshops so far, with two more scheduled for the rest of the year.

- **Blog with weekly postings** – This is another of the items the directors felt would be better served by waiting.

- **Vehicles for communicating with other members** – With the last web update, the Hub now functions very much like Facebook. Members can create public or private groups,

private message other members, and see what friends are up to.

- **Industry news updates** – Our amazing Industry News duo sends out well-researched emails every Sunday. If you're not receiving them, please let me know.

- **Member news updates** – Each week, member news is shared via the Inside WFWA e-blast. There are also forums on the website for sharing good news and promoting. Don't be shy; share your news via the forums and the member news link on the website so we can all cheer the successes of our members.

- **Craft/industry discussions** – At any point, you can find craft and industry discussions in the forums. Some forums are more active than others and the board is taking a closer look at increasing participation.

- **Social media** – WFWA has both a Twitter account and a Facebook page. Within the next couple of months, you should see a livelier social media presence. If you haven't liked the Facebook page or aren't following us on Twitter, please do.

- **A newsletter** – This is the third edition of Write On! and I think the hard work by the editorial team speaks for itself.

In the next few weeks, you'll be hearing about plans for an online birthday party. We're planning a week of fun contests leading up to giveaways and celebration on September 9.

Write On!



The WFWA Founding Team

Do you know the founders of the Women's Fiction Writers Association?

Orly Konig-Lopez
President

www.orkoniglopez.com

Kerry Lonsdale
Vice President, Programs
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Laura Drake
Vice President, Finance / Treasurer
www.lauradrakebooks.com

Linda Avellar
Secretary
www.lindaavellar.com

Marilyn Brant
Guiding Scribe
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Maggie Marr
WFWA Legal Counsel
www.maggiemarr.com

If you haven't already, send them a Friend Request on the WFWA site to stay connected and see their newest posts in The Hub.

Books are mirrors of the soul. — Virginia Woolf

goodreads



The Women's Fiction Goodreads Book Club Is Going Strong!

Reasons to participate ...

- 1) Education.** Reading, studying, and discussing published women's fiction books is a great way to steep yourself in the breadth and depth of your chosen genre, and a great way to absorb craft.
- 2) Connections.** Interacting with other WFWA authors is a great way to create beneficial and long lasting relationships. And by purchasing the books, you're supporting both the industry and authors you hope will support you.

Reasons to promote ...

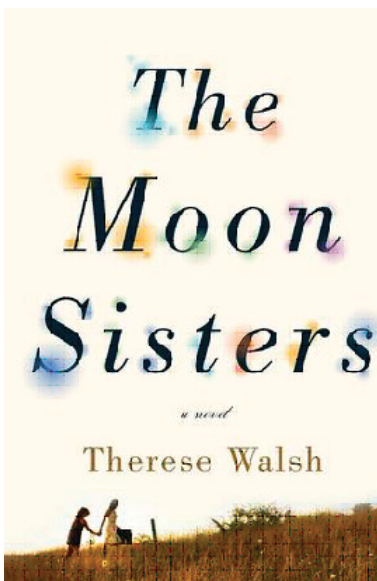
- 1) Visibility.** Provide greater visibility to WFWA authors. We're building the Goodreads bookshelves and, in time, all of the published WF titles will be displayed.
- 2) Awareness.** Raise awareness of women's fiction among readers and awareness for the association among writers and industry.

You do not need to be a WFWA member to join, so please spread the word!

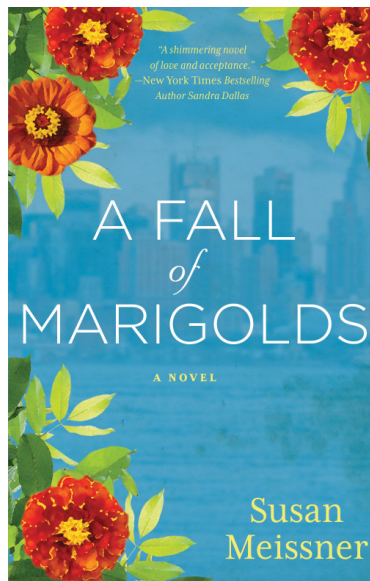
<https://womensfictionwriters.org/programs/womens-fiction-book-club/>

Coming up on the Women's Fiction Book Club:

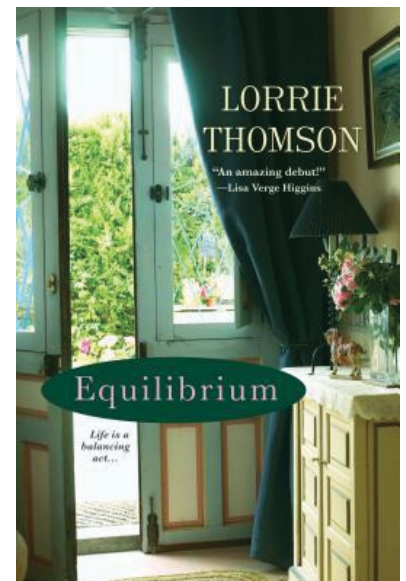
August 2014
Therese Walsh,
The Moon Sisters



September 2014
Susan Meissner,
A Fall of Marigolds



October 2014
Lorrie Thomson,
Equilibrium





7 Steps to Becoming a Successful Debut in Women's Fiction

Carly Watters

I love working with debut authors. Many writers like to quietly admit they're a debut, but in my opinion there is unlimited potential for great books in this world. You don't need a pile of credentials to get an agent or have an agent get your debut novel a great book deal.

Write a great book. It always starts with a good book. Don't forget the basics. The only way a debut will break out in women's fiction is if it has universal themes like love, loss, respect, trust, bravery, loyalty, and more. You don't want to connect with one group of people; you want your story to connect with people no matter where they're from. Breakout debut women's fiction is about making women feel like they're not alone, that one person's struggles are the struggles we all feel and relate to.

Build a community of fans. Social media is not about spamming your followers; social

media is about authentic engagement about things like your hobbies or special interests. Your community will like you for you and then in turn support your writing and buy your books. Social media is still like making friends the old-fashioned way with technology helping speed it along. Communities like WFWA are great ways to build contacts and support each other. Don't forget about Twitter and keeping your 140 character tweets full of your voice. Twitter is a great way to practice things like elevator pitches and summing up your novel in bite sized pieces.

My rules about social media:

1. Pick one that connects with your style (Tumblr for images, Twitter for short thoughts and jokes, Facebook for family connections and posting links that you have lengthy opinions about) and stick with it. You don't have to do it all.

2. If you are going to post on social media engage between 1 and 5 times per day for Twitter, and 1 and 2 times on Facebook. Also, get yourself a social media guide that tells you the best time to Tweet and post to Facebook. (Hint: it's 4pm in the afternoon on Twitter and Saturday mornings on Facebook.)

3. If you don't feel comfortable then don't do it. There's quite literally nothing worse than a Twitter feed that hasn't been posted to in 6 months. It's a social media graveyard that you don't want your name attached to.

4. Talk about hobbies (like running or cooking) not only about your kids (some people don't feel comfortable with sharing details about their kids and their pictures and I agree), other family matters, or only about the writing process. If you only talk about the writing process you are going to attract a fan base of writers, not necessarily readers and fans to buy your book.

5. Pinterest is great for getting book cover ideas, posting images of settings, characters, and other atmospheric things, but it's not going to get you the direct ROI that Twitter or Facebook will. Think of Pinterest as an extra, 'behind the scenes' look at your book projects.

Hand pick an agent that's right for you. No agent is better than a 'bad' agent. You need an agent with the right contacts domestically and internationally. You don't want an average deal, you want a great deal with an editor that fits with you too. Women's fiction does really well abroad, so don't forget to ask about the UK, Australian, Brazilian, and Scandinavian countries who love great 'book club books.' Women's fiction also makes great audiobooks, and (dare I say it?) great films! A skilled women's fiction agent will know all these things and know the best ways to get you money from all these streams.

Don't quit your day job. Yet. Many writers think their day job is getting in the way of their writing and count down the days until they can quit because that big book deal is on the way, right? Wrong, for now. Keeping your day job has many benefits: inspiration,

steady income, and a routine. When you quit your day job you have to get your inspiration from sitting at your writing desk all day, your income will come in crazy spurts and there will be many lows, and you suddenly have no routine and the norm becomes sleeping in and working in your PJs all day. I'm a big proponent, if you can, to keep your day job for as long as you can. Once your writing income surpasses your day job income and you have a multi-book contract where you can plan out your income for months and years to come, then it's time to think about whether you need that day job.

Getting paid in publishing looks like this:

- Getting your advance paid in thirds: part on signing, part on delivery and acceptance of the manuscript, and part on publication.
- Twice yearly royalty statements, but only once you've earned out that advance.
- Foreign publishers, if you're lucky enough to get some translation deals, don't pay quickly. If you get a deal in Italy or Greece for example, you'll get paid, on average, 8-12 months later than you're supposed to.

My experience with debut women's fiction authors is that sometimes when they quit their day job before getting published, their books start to be about the idiosyncrasy of daily life with their kids or their spouse/partner. When what we need is big idea debuts that are about more than the mundane things of daily life. (Don't be afraid to think big for your debut!)

Write a book a year. All the major publishers want women's fiction authors to be able to write a book a year. I often do two-book deals for debut authors so that the publisher is making a long-term commitment to growing my authors and investing in them. That means the leisurely pace you might have written and edited your first novel is thrown out the window. Now, you need to write a book in 6-12 months and when your editor gives you their edit notes before 'accepting' the manuscript (so you can get paid) you

usually have a limited window of 4-10 weeks for that. When the copy edits come in you usually have 2-3 weeks to approve them. Remember all that waffling about where the period goes in the second line in your second chapter—no more! Confidence must be at a peak; you must know your opinions and your convictions about what you want your book to 'do.' Debut authors will be thrust into the publishing machine. Get ready for the pace to change.

Think about your brand. Many writers want to write in multiple categories, but I find women's fiction writers know their niche. That makes it easy to build a brand. Everything from matching your website colors with your Twitter background, to engaging in your social media networks about TV/movies/interior design/fashion or women-centric things will help position you in a women's lifestyle category. Building a brand is about helping people know what to expect from you. And you want people to expect interesting, quality, dark, funny, or romantic things.

Support other women's fiction authors. This is separate than the community section because it's about that outward love that you give without expecting anything in return. Buy published women's fiction authors. Tell people when you buy their books! Tell your friends and family about great women's fiction out there for sale. If you want there to be a market for your book when it comes out you need to preserve this great niche we have! There is nothing more important than speaking with your dollars. When you promote other people—because you honestly enjoy their work and not because you expect anything back at that time—the women's fiction crowd will remember that and when it's your turn to ask for blurbs or organize a signing with another author it will be much easier. It's about being a tastemaker and aligning your name with other women's fiction writers.

Remember: women's fiction is one of the most desirable categories right now for fiction. Agents and editors are looking to sign up

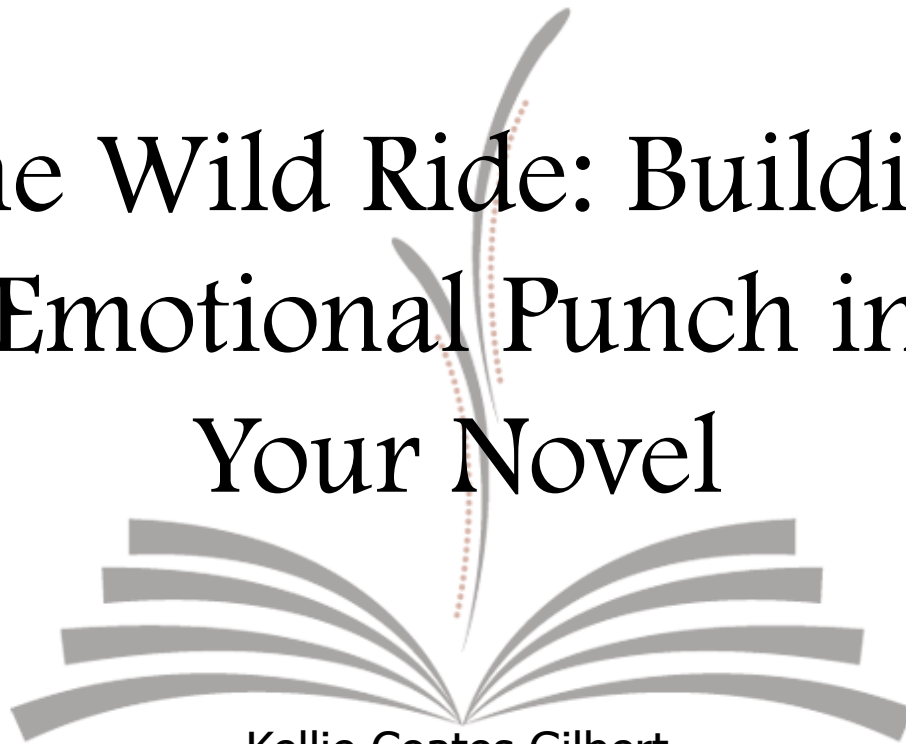
projects. This isn't a market that's saturated. Not only are we looking for great women's fiction, we're looking for authors that want to have a career writing it. Keep these things in mind and you'll be ahead of the pack. •



Carly Watters began her publishing career in London, England, at the Darley Anderson Literary, TV, and Film Agency and Bloomsbury. She completed her MA in Publishing Studies at City University London with a thesis on the social, political, and economic impact of literary prizes on trade publishing. Now a Literary Agent at the P.S. Literary Agency, she is actively building her list and looking for new writers. Never without a book on hand, she reads across categories, which is reflected in the genres she represents: women's fiction, upmarket fiction, YA, literary thrillers, and select nonfiction. She has placed books at Penguin Group, Random House, HarperCollins, Simon & Schuster, Adams Media, and more for her growing list of authors.

Find her online at www.carlywatters.com and on Twitter @carlywatters.

The Wild Ride: Building Emotional Punch in Your Novel



Kellie Coates Gilbert

Ever go to an amusement park and get talked into going on a roller coaster you consider a little past your comfort level? You follow well-meaning friends, take your place in the waiting line, and listen to the crowd's excited chatter. Inside, you sense excitement, maybe even a bit of doubt creeps in and you wonder if you've maybe made a mistake?

Before you can change your mind, you're at the front of the line and it's your turn. You slide into the hard plastic seat, your palms a bit damp as you tightly grasp the safety bar. There's a click and you're harnessed in place. A tight smile is pasted across your face when the tiny car jerks forward, and stops again as attendants load the next car . . . and the next. You take a deep breath, knowing there's no turning back.

Chains grind beneath and your car chugs forward. Your senses go on high alert as the car slowly ascends. The smell of corndogs, sweet cotton candy, and buttered popcorn fill the air. These aromas hit your nostrils, but

instead of feeling hungry your stomach lurches in anticipation of what is ahead. Far too soon, the carousel's lyrical music fades from below, signaling you must be near the crest.

Suddenly, nothing is in your line of vision but blue sky, as if your car is suspended from invisible strings. Your heart pounds and you hold your breath, knowing what's about to happen.

*So . . . as a reader, what are you **feeling** right now?*

Too often, a novelist considers their next chapter or scene by asking "what should happen next?"

I challenge authors to reframe their thinking. A better question is:

What do I want my reader to feel next?
Then craft the scene to fit.

Isn't that why a consumer shells out the bucks to buy your novel? Readers want to leave their

normal world, hoping to exchange valuable time for a highly emotive experience.

We immerse ourselves in the pages of a novel to fall in love, feel desire, experience adventure, embrace our heroes. We long to understand a confusing world and sort out relationship tensions. We want to be thrilled, surprised, scared, and even worried everything is not going to turn out in the end.

When we open the pages of a book, we hope to take the ride of our lives. As an author, it's your job to take us on that ride.

Some of you are mentally evaluating your last writing session, wondering how to put this concept into practice. Generally speaking, the answer is simple. Make a routine of asking about every sentence, every paragraph, every scene and chapter: *What does that make my reader feel?* As an author, be diligent about creating that mindset and you'll have a page-turner that keeps readers' interest and motivates them to buy every release.

In particular, there are ways to create the intense emotive experience you want to deliver. Here are a few very effective tools I've learned to use, in no particular order of importance:

1. START WITH A GREAT HOOK

Nothing bores a reader more than a slow start. You've spent hours carefully plotting a story about flawed characters with worthy goals, a great inciting incident that creates conflict, plot points that ratchet the tension and change the characters, and a satisfying ending. Now start with a bang! Get the reader's attention on the first page—the first line even.

Here are some of my favorite openings.

From *All Fall Down* by Jennifer Weiner:

"Do you generally use alcohol or drugs more than once a week?"

This line caught my attention and made me feel puzzled. Who was asking? Why? How would the person answer? The line also strongly suggested the story problem.

From *Where Mercy Flows* by Karen Harter:

The Judge always had the final say. Right or wrong, he was God. His truth was a hard, unbending line that never wavered. Not even for me. When I was young I called him Daddy.

I'm immediately pulled into the tension between this daughter and her father, feeling a bit of compassion for this woman—even a bit of anger toward him.

From *A Woman of Fortune* by Kellie Coates Gilbert (my own book):

Until today, Claire Massey had never been inside the walls of a federal prison. She'd taken French cooking lessons in Paris, photographed the aurora borealis, and even dined with a president and his wife. But never in her wildest imagination had she ever contemplated herself doing this.

As the author, I wanted my reader to feel compassion for my protagonist, to wonder what in the world had happened to this woman?

And, here's one more from *Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult:

In nineteen minutes, you can mow the front lawn, color your hair, watch a third of a hockey game. In nineteen minutes, you can bake scones or get a tooth filled by a dentist; you can fold laundry for a family of five . . . In nineteen minutes, you can order a pizza and get it delivered. You can read a story to a child or have your oil changed. You can walk a mile. You can sew a hem. In nineteen minutes, you can stop the world, or you can just jump off it. In nineteen minutes, you can get revenge.

The narrator is obviously a woman in distress, which I feel as the reader. I'm left with so many questions that make me read on. Mainly, who gets revenge? Why? (I'm also intrigued by the power of the repetition of the phrase "nineteen minutes" which is the book title. Why nineteen—why not twenty, or another number?)

2. END WITH A GREAT HOOK

In the same manner, the end of every chapter should compel a reader to continue to the next page. As an author, you never want them to place the book down and perhaps get busy and never

pick the story back up. Likely, your readers will have to put your book down eventually, but make it hard to do.

Here are chapter closings that really did the job.

From *Healer of Carthage* by Lynne Gentry:

She scoured the tunnel for a weapon. Why hadn't she brought a knife, a stick, a club, anything? Lisbeth whispered a prayer in case Cyprian's God was listening, braced her feet, and prepared to swing her sack with every ounce of force she could put behind it. Suddenly a hand came through the darkness and clamped her mouth. Before she could break free, someone dragged her in the opposite direction of her mother's agonizing pleas for mercy.

How could a worried reader put the book down not knowing who grabbed Lisbeth and dragged her away, keeping her from her mother who is in severe danger?

From *Save Me* by Lisa Scottoline:

Fire flared closer. She pulled on the lever with all her might. She felt hotter and hotter. She couldn't breathe, her lungs choked with smoke. "Melly!" Rose screamed, at the top of her lungs. There was no reply.

My heart lurches every time I read that one. I connect as a mother. My heart fills with dread.

From *Mother of Pearl* by Kellie Coates Gilbert (my book):

I take the package. My hands unclasp the flap, and I slide the contents to my lap, never letting my gaze leave Chad's face. Finally, I look down. With shaking hands, I lift a news article off the top and raise it to a level where I can read the headline. What I see leaves me stunned.

Hopefully, the reader will be too curious not to read on to the next chapter to learn what she discovered.

3. DON'T TELL ME, SHOW ME . . . AND DO IT IN A UNIQUE WAY

In her book *True Colors*, author Kristin Hannah

needed to tell her readers that protagonist Vivi Ann was bored in her current relationship, that this new man was exciting, even a bit dangerous. Here is the effective way she established this for her readers:

Slowly, she turned to face Dallas again and saw the way he was smiling. "Good idea, Vivi Ann. Run off to that pretty boyfriend of yours. He looks like one of those lapdog men who like the leash. See if he can scratch your itch."

"I don't have an itch." But even as she said it, she knew suddenly it was a lie. And Dallas knew it, too.

And a few pages later:

He finished the carving and put down his knife, looking at her finally. "If you saw someone standing on the edge of the cliff and you thought they were going to jump, what would you say?"

"I'd tell them to back away before they got hurt."

"Step back, Vivi."

So, what do you think? Does this snappy dialogue do the trick? Do we hope Vivi moves forward with this relationship? Are we worried and want her to choose wisely? Does the passage compel us to read on and see what happens? Is this guy really as dangerous as he sounds?

I love how Kristin uses phrases that say so much: *pretty boyfriend, lapdog men who like the leash, scratch your itch*. Can you follow suit and find fresh and interesting ways to say things that evoke a mental picture and make the reader feel the emotion, instead of naming it?

Likewise, before you craft a scene, establish what is at stake and what the key emotion you want to create for your reader. When you're finished, let a critique partner read the passage and name the emotion they felt. Did you do the job you intended? Can your beta-reader identify words and phrases that created that emotion in their minds? Can you?

An easy way to keep your reader connected emotionally is to power-up your word choices.

Make sure all the actions are concrete and specific. Eliminate words you can't "see." Can your mind see it or thing? What does it or thing look like?

Exchange *He took it from her hands* for *He took the black purse from her hands*. Exchange general for specific. Toss *He read the newspaper* and instead use *The pudgy-faced minister scoured the Wall Street Journal*.

4. DON'T GIVE THE READER WHAT THEY WANT—PROMISE THEM WHAT THEY WANT

A character's core desires include love, freedom, security, adventure, power, intimacy, status, and significance. What lie has your character believed and why? How does that lie create an internal struggle keeping your character from what she most wants and needs?

Be mean to your characters. Make everything worse. Keep the stakes high. Dangle success and then rip it away.

Remember that roller coaster ride? Slowly build up to your character attaining her goal, keep her dangled as long as possible with no support in sight, then dash her hopes and make it appear a crash is inevitable. Pull some sharp corners and surprise the reader with plot twists they never saw coming. Conclude the journey leaving the reader satisfied and breathless.

That's an emotional ride they'll pay to take again.

How I wish we had more time (and space) to continue. There are so many ways to fashion a story filled with emotion, many more passages to examine written by authors who keep their readers coming back for more because the stories evoke some deep connection.

I invite you to continue the conversation by hopping over to my website

www.kelliecoatesgilbert.com You can leave a message for me there, and follow links to social media sites where I hang out. Of course, the WFWA forums are another excellent place to continue exchanging ideas. See you there! •



Kellie Coates Gilbert spent nearly twenty-five years working in courtrooms and behind the scenes of some of the largest and most well-known cases in America. Kellie was one of the lead paralegals in the Jack-in-the-Box litigation, where uncooked hamburger resulted in the deaths of several toddlers and made many more critically ill. In the late nineties, she investigated the nation's largest cattle fraud, which is now the subplot of her recently released *A Woman of Fortune* (Baker Publishing/Revell). Her books not only explore the heart issues that matter most to women, but often allow readers an inside peek into her former legal world.





The WFWA Cafe

with Jessica Ferguson

Summer is here. Children and their noisy friends race through the house while older siblings blare music and video games. My brain is filled with mom/wife/neighbor things to do, but nothing creative. No characters teasing or plots forthcoming. What's your summer like so far?

I need a break. I need to hang out with writer friends who'll fill me up—not drain me. So let's head on over to the WFWA Café to recharge our creative batteries. My treat!

Today Linda Pennell, Sara Mikulic, Peggy Bjarno, Louise Miller, and Christine Adler are gathered around the table. They've saved a spot for you!

Hello, ladies, you all look cool, calm, and motivated. So let's discuss your best brainstorming techniques; I need them! I'm in a slump.

Linda: My critique partner and I have been together for several years now, so we can, ahem, read one another like books. Please forgive me. I couldn't resist the cliché because it is so apt. When we have face-to-face meetings, we talk about our WIP's and ultimately begin finishing each other's sentences. We've solved some big plot problems this way!

Sara: A whiteboard, a couple of colored markers, and bursts of time to write whatever comes to mind.

Peggy: I like to pick up on yesterday's writing and read that last chapter or scene. If I did a good job I really get into it, and that lets me continue on (usually . . . hopefully) as if I never stopped.

Louise: I like to start with the most ridiculous, outrageous idea first—I find this helps loosen me up and not to take myself too seriously—that way, right

off the bat I'm not trying to "get it right." I find my best ideas come when I'm really letting my mind be open to anything and everything.

Christine: I keep a folder of writing/story ideas on my computer. I'll pull one out, write down a general idea, and then free write about it for ten minutes.

Jessica: *So many wonderful tips, but all I want to do these days is lose myself in movies. That's my escape. Are there any movies that have influenced your writing?*

Linda: I can't name a particular movie, but movies in general have been a great influence because they are such visual experiences and can tell stories so well. When I write, there is a little movie playing in my head. I see the story as it unfolds which is a big part of the fun of writing. Such is the power of visualization and imagination.

Sara: *Silence of the Lambs* (book & movie) is seminal for me. Psychological, thrilling, with tight storytelling and two memorable antagonists who alarm and fascinate. Clarice is a strong, intelligent woman who is vulnerable and competent. She is never unsexed, never adopts man-like qualities, nor does she use her body as an object to resolve the conflict. She's my favorite female in literature.

Peggy: None. I don't watch movies (my hubby is ADD and can't sit still that long!)

Louise: The first thing that came to mind wasn't a movie, but a TV show. *Gilmore Girls*—because the dialogue is so fast and fun, the characters are both charming and human, and their emotions run deep. And a big inspiration for my debut novel *Fair Season* was the desire to create a whole town.

Christine: I loved the movie *Sliding Doors* because it examined both extremes of the tiniest What If? event: What if she catches the train? What if she misses the train? Coming up with character sketches for several people, along with their relationships to each other and then posing a what if question and letting it spin out in multiple directions is another great writing technique.

Jessica: *I wish I could go back in time to talk to myself when I was a beginning writer. Of course, I'd want to know all I know now, otherwise, what good would it do? What would you tell yourselves if you could go back?*

Linda: Do not be discouraged. Learn, learn, learn, and be persistent. Writing is a skill, just like learning to

play the piano or shoot baskets. It must be practiced in order to get better.

Jessica: *I agree. And I haven't written a thing since my husband retired last August. I'm afraid I'll forget how. My ideas seem to be drying up.*

Sara: More writing yields more inspiration. Seriously. You fear it now, but the more time you spend with it, the easier it gets to sit down and write more. The unwritten chapters scare you because you haven't written them yet. Stop playing ollyollyoxenfree with the beginning and write. All chapters become familiar once you sink into the details and the dialogue and, eventually, your characters astound you.

Peggy: Don't stop writing. Exercising the muscle is what it's all about. Day in, day out. Ten words, a thousand. Malcolm Gladwell talks about "the ten thousand hours" in his book *Outliers*, and he's absolutely right. DON'T STOP WRITING. Put in those hours, dammit!

Louise: You become a writer by writing—by doing the work. Don't wait for permission, for other people to tell you are good, don't wait for a degree or some other credential. What you have to say has meaning and value. Now get to it!

Christine: You can make a living out of writing! Start now and write every day. Don't quit your day job, but write every day and read widely and learn about the business. I wish I had known this much sooner than I did. Otherwise, I have no regrets. Ask me again after I've published a novel.

Jessica: *You'll get there, Christine. And then I'll ask you again. Do you have some great book-related memories about your childhood? I remember when it was time to do math homework, I'd stick a Nancy Drew mystery inside my math book. So much more fun!*

Linda: By fifth grade, I had changed schools three times with less than stellar results where my early education was concerned. My teacher that year read to us each day from novels that were intended for an adult audience, and in doing so, enriched our vocabularies and broadened our interests. She was also a terrific storyteller who had traveled extensively. She opened the world to us.

Sara: *Flowers in the Attic* felt like it was written just for me. It reached inside my soul and pulled out all of the little parts of me that enjoyed dark, twisted family histories with perverse skeletons. I sped through the rest of the books, hungry for more. After

I read the last page of *Seeds of Yesterday*, I bawled myself to sleep because it was over. I would never get to experience them new again.

Peggy: This was many eons ago, long before we had kids reading at three or four years of age. I was in the third grade. We went to the school library once a week, and I will never forget the day I took out the book *Misty of Chincoteague*. I loved the pictures because I loved all things "horse." When I got it home I discovered that I COULD READ IT!! The world had opened for me then.

Louise: I can clearly remember receiving my first book for Christmas. I was taught to read before I entered school, by a pair of elderly sisters that lived in a brick house next door. I just remember how happy I was to receive the book—it was a Sesame Street theme. I still feel the same way when I enter a bookstore—excitement and connection

Christine: I think one of the greatest things about my otherwise dismal childhood was that I lived walking distance from my local library. Once I discovered that building, I never felt lonely again.

Jessica: *I felt the same way about my library, Christine. Libraries still offer me refuge. What's the biggest surprise you've encountered as a writer?*

Linda: I wouldn't call this a huge surprise, but it was certainly a pleasant one. Before I became seriously involved in the writing community, I had heard that authors could be a rather difficult, jealous lot. They didn't work and play well with others. That may be the case with some, but the vast majority of authors whom I have met have been both gracious and kind. Many are now good friends.

Sara: (1) You have to find your writing method/signature. Organic. Outliner. Combo. Morning writer. Night-owl writer. Whatever it takes, you have a way that works best for you and you have to discover that and nurture it. (2) The first draft really is for you. Editing is when you slice it and shape it for others. (3) Showing up to write is half of the battle. 4) Finishing is the other half.

Peggy: That I'm not already published! I have a lot of confidence in my talent, skill, and creativity, but life intervenes and has "put the stick in my spokes" so I haven't finished THE book. Yep, I've written four books, but haven't finished the one I'll fight for. It's in the works, so just watch me!

Louise: That writing is a team sport. Yes—the bulk of the action takes place alone, at home, with

your thoughts and your laptop. But I have made the biggest strides with my writing by being around and working with other writers. Feedback, support, studying craft, friendship—my writing friends have helped me (and my book) get to a place I honestly do not think I would have reached without them.

Christine: For some reason, I'm always pleasantly surprised when I go back and read something I've written some time ago (months, years) and still think, "Wow, this is good!" It encourages me on the bad days. The other surprise was how genuinely kind, helpful and encouraging other writers are. Not that I expected a bunch of meanies, but I love how they all make me feel like I'm one of them.

Jessica: *We have each other. Whether we live in Louisiana or some exotic city across the world, whether we're emailing, critiquing, or losing ourselves in each other's novels and manuscripts, we share a passion. We truly understand each other's "bumps" along the way. I find that comforting. So, until next time, ladies, write on!*



JESSICA FERGUSON is the author of *The Last Daughter*, a novella published by The Wild Rose Press. She interviews authors for *Southern Writers Magazine* and is co-editor of *Swamp Lily Review*, a *Journal of Louisiana Literature and Arts*. In her spare time, she plays with her recently retired husband. Jess blogs at www.jessyferguson.blogspot.com.

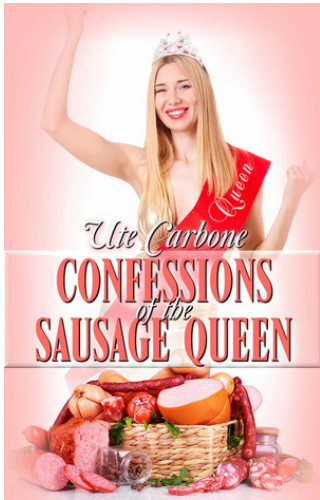
MEMBER NEWS

We're excited to share these new member releases coming out this quarter.

Confessions of the Sausage Queen

Release Date: July 7th

By Ute Carbone



Synopsis from Goodreads:

Mandy Minhouser figures she's already had her fifteen minutes of fame and excitement. The hype created by the picture that her husband Randy sent in to Girls! Girls! Girls!, which featured Mandy wearing nothing but a garden hat, has finally died down. And life in the little town of Kassenburg goes on as it ever has. Until Big Bill Ludowski, founder and owner of the town's largest employer—Bill's Big and Tasty Sausage—dies while he and Mandy's grandmother Lila Rose were, as Mandy puts it, doing their best Adam and Eve imitation under the hydrangea bushes. That Gran and Big Bill have had an affair that began around the same time as World War II is a secret that everyone in Kassenburg knows. But a new secret is about to be revealed. Big Bill has, in a DVD that only he, his lawyers, and Mandy's Gran know about, bequeathed the sausage factory to Lila. And he's posthumously offered the job of CEO to Mandy, much to the consternation of his relatives. Mandy doesn't know squat about the sausage biz and Bill's grandson Hughes, the factory's CFO, does everything in his power to discredit her and close the Big and Tasty. But Mandy has the one thing that Hughes doesn't—family and friends willing to put themselves on the line to save the sausage people. With hope, faith, and a whole lot of luck, Mandy and company might manage to do just that.

The Good Girl

Release Date: July 29th

By Mary Kubica



Synopsis from Goodreads:

"I've been following her for the past few days. I know where she buys her groceries, where she has her dry cleaning done, where she works. I don't know the color of her eyes or what they look like when she's scared. But I will."

Born to a prominent Chicago judge and his stifled socialite wife, Mia Dennett moves against the grain as a young inner-city art teacher. One night, Mia enters a bar to meet her on-again, off-again boyfriend. But when he doesn't show, she unwisely leaves with an enigmatic stranger. With his smooth moves and modest wit, at first Colin Thatcher seems like a safe one-night stand. But following Colin home will turn out to be the worst mistake of Mia's life. Colin's job was to abduct Mia as part of a wild extortion plot and deliver her to his employers. But the plan takes an unexpected turn when Colin suddenly decides to hide Mia in a secluded cabin in rural Minnesota, evading the police and his deadly superiors. Mia's mother, Eve, and detective Gabe Hoffman will stop at nothing to find them, but no one could have predicted the emotional entanglements that eventually cause this family's world to shatter.

An addictively suspenseful and tautly written thriller, *The Good Girl* is a compulsive debut that reveals how even in the perfect family, nothing is as it seems...

Have something being published between October and December 2014? Please send an email to

writeon@womensfictionwriters.org.

We'd LOVE to get your news in the next e-zine!

Will you consider helping WFWA grow?

WFWA is an entirely volunteer-run organization. The programs we're currently running, as well as the ones we'd like to introduce, depend on the creativity and dedication of our members.

If you're interested in blogging, mentoring, contests, communications, publicity, workshops, websites, board positions, or have an idea that will benefit the members, please contact me directly.

Orly Konig-Lopez orly@oklopez.com

WFWA Founding President

How to Love Your WIP (Even When You Hate It)



Erin Bartels

Ah, the delightful agony of writing! What heights of euphoria as you pen the last word of that first draft; what depths of despair as you realize that, well . . . it needs some work. We've all been there—that moment when, at some level, you realize that you're entertaining negative thoughts toward your literary baby, that magnificent, utterly unique being you birthed from your own mind, which, until just now you had loved dearly, unconditionally, and without reservation.

Maybe it happens as you reach the middle of your first draft. Just when things seemed to be flowing organically and effortlessly, you *KA-CHUNG!!* hit a rut—where did that thing come from?—and go careening into the ditch alongside the road, stuck in the mire of uncertainty or the muck of disgust with your story, your characters, and yourself.

Or perhaps it happens once you get some feedback from other readers. You were sure that they would rave about it, perhaps tell you that they'd put a comma right there, but other than that, it's ready to go to the printer! Instead you hear that something isn't working. That romance isn't quite believable. This character is static. The symbolism you worked so hard to entwine around the story is missed completely by one reader while another says it's choking off her air supply. One person says to scrap that subplot while another says it's the best part of the book and should be the main plot.

What's a writer to do?

It's easy to get paralyzed, to resist doing anything at all rather than do something "wrong." It's easy to start resenting your work-in-progress (WIP), to push it away and

start on something fresh, something that still has the bloom of infinite possibility upon it. It's more fun to pick up that shiny new apple and take that first snappy bite than to go back to that half-eaten one on the sort-of-dirty kitchen counter that's oxidizing and turning browner—ever browner!—before your very eyes.

As the ~~proud~~ caretaker of a number unfinished manuscripts tucked away in dusty folders on my C:/ drive, I can attest to the fact that it's way more fun to start a book than to finish—truly finish, for real and for all time, all the revisions and everything—something that feels like, in some way, it's just not quite right. But the reality of it is that what gets published is the manuscript that is no longer a WIP but a WTF: Work That's Finished. (I got you there for a minute, didn't I?)

So how do we stay the course? How do we continue to look at our WIPs with sympathy instead of disdain? How do we maintain that desire to bring them into their fullest and most complete form, the form in which they must be in order to start submitting?

I think if you have kids, the answer may be obvious to you.

Ladies, when you're pregnant, waiting and anticipating, isn't that just like the idea phase of a book? You think about this baby all the time, even if it's just in the back of your mind. You can feel it moving around inside of you, growing, getting stronger, readying itself for the outside world. There are times you're uncertain, and yet still it grows and grows until there's no more room inside you and the story must come out.

Finally, after gestating the correct amount of time (hopefully) it is brought forth through tremendous pain and effort and sweat and blood and tears of agony and of joy. During the birthing process, you feel fear. What if there are complications? What if it doesn't look right? What if I can't do this? But you do it. You push that idea for a story out into the world. That's the writing of your first draft. And there you have it. Your story. Your manuscript. Your baby.

It is perfect. It is beautiful. You know you will do everything in your power to protect and nurture it. You bring your baby home and your family comes to visit, maybe some close friends. And that's when it starts.

The advice.

The advice! Your mother and your mother-in-law and your know-it-all sister and your pastor's wife . . . they all know what's best for your baby. You almost wish you didn't have to share that sweet baby story with anyone, don't you? That it could just be your own private little baby.

But of course, babies are meant to grow up and go out into the world. They don't come out as fully-formed adults. (Thank God!) Your job as a parent is to help them become happy, talented, respectable, helpful grown-ups that will make some contribution to this world. You have to raise this child. And that's difficult process of rewriting, revision, and editing.

When you look at your WIP, you see that maybe it's not as perfect as you hoped it would be. It's messy. Perhaps in this one area it disappoints you, and over here it offends someone, and right there it lacks some character development . . . those are the times when you should look at it like a child that just needs a loving, helping hand.

Even when they exasperate us, we still love our children and we want what's best for them. We don't scrap them and start on another one. (Though apparently my own mother's frustration with my high maintenance sister was how I came about, the doctor advising her that if she had a second baby she'd be so busy with the second one she wouldn't have the time to fret so much about the first. Analogies only go so far, after all.)

When our child misbehaves, we correct him. When she makes a mess of things, we help her pick it all up. When he offends someone, we apologize and work to educate him.

When your WIP is disappointing you, when it feels like maybe you've wasted your time

with this particular writing endeavor, when you just don't know what to do to fix things and want to throw it all away, think of it as a beloved wayward child. Start brainstorming solutions. Ask for help from professionals.

And most importantly, remember that there is no such thing as a perfect book. You do your best with what you've got and hope and pray that God makes up for the things you lack.

I'll let you in on a little secret. I'm not a perfect mom and my kid, while sweet and wonderful and smart and funny, is not a perfect kid. He spills his milk and I get exasperated and impatient. I tell him to put on his shoes or pick up his toys and he "didn't hear me." (Apparently this is a stunt I regularly pulled as a kid.) I say it's bedtime and he moans and drags his feet and I get upset that he doesn't immediately do as directed with a bounce in his step. When he becomes a teenager, I'm sure he will say things that hurt me deeply, and I'll probably do the same to him.

There are no perfect people and there are no perfect books. When we let go of the expectation that our WIP has to be perfect, we can love it even when it's making us crazy.

The best part is that, even without being perfect, babies grow up into adults who go out and make their mark on the world. When we take home that precious little bundle, we have no idea just how many lives it may touch many years from now. Our stories, imperfect as they are, have the power to reach out across time and across the globe, to move readers to laughter and tears, to heal broken hearts, to bind up wounds, to stimulate important conversations, and to give others hope.

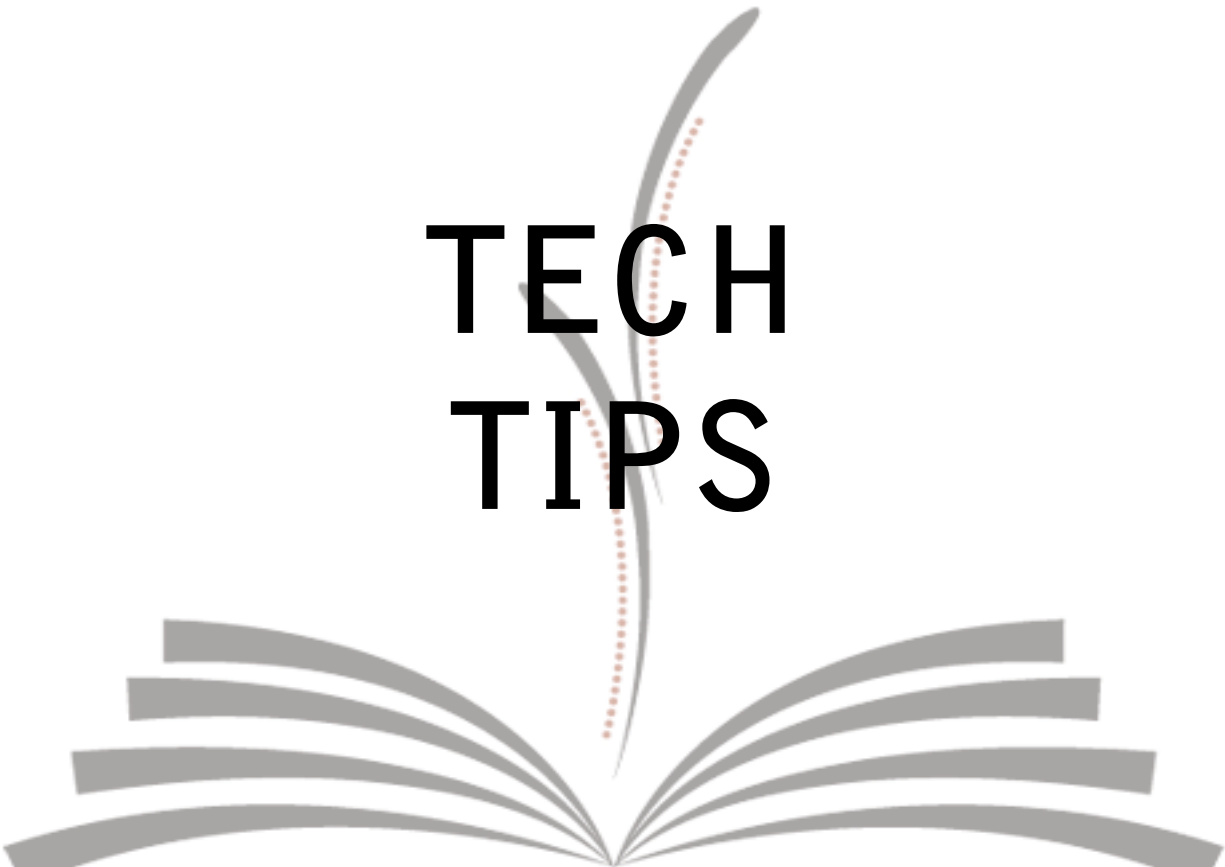
I don't know exactly what my son will do as a grown-up, whether he will have a big impact on a few people or a million people. But I'll know that when he goes out and makes his way in the big wide world, that I will have done my best to give him a good, long, meaningful life. Not a perfect one, but a good one.

And what better hope could we have for our fiction?

So love what you're writing—even when it's hard to love. Your dedication will pay off in ways you can't even imagine right now. •



Named by the *Saturday Evening Post* among "the greatest up-and-coming fiction writers today," **Erin Bartels** has worked in the publishing industry for twelve years. She is currently loving her WIP through thick and thin and dreaming of the day when it's all grown up. You can find her at www.erinbartels.com.



TECH TIPS

from Tasha Seegmiller

THE CLOUD

With summer in full swing, and the subsequent trips, vacations, and life, you may find that your normal writing space is disrupted. In the past, when these kinds of times occurred in life, the solution was to email copies of what was written or carry (and keep track of) disks or drives of various sizes. Cloud technology has made those practices obscure and provided a way to keep backups if your summer is including a simple staycation.

WHAT IT IS

The cloud is a term used in the computer world to refer to a place where documents can be saved and accessed from multiple computers. When working with a program that has cloud capabilities, uploading that document to the cloud allows the newest

version to be available from many different locations.

There are many similarities between all of these products. The main difference for many of them tends to come in the compatibility between mobile devices (tablets and phones) and whether they will allow editing on that device. Below is a brief explanation of the different cloud options available for free.

DROPBOX

Dropbox allows you to upload folders, documents, photos, whatever and share them easily. It also allows for easy sharing which could come in handy for getting documents to critique partners or beta readers. It is a free resource that starts you out with 2 GB of storage space, something you can increase through encouraging friends to sign up for the services or by paying for more.

GOOGLE DRIVE

Many people probably still recognize this as Google Docs, the original name of the product. There are two parts to this service. The first is the website that allows for the creation of documents, slide shows, spreadsheets, etc. This is a great resource, and if you have a gmail account (free if you don't). You can access it from the address (drive.google.com) or open your email and click on the nine squares in the upper right area of your screen, then click on the green/yellow/blue triangle.

What some people may not know is that downloading the app gives you the opportunity to upload documents from the program you created them in, and edit directly in that program. There is no need to copy and paste into the document template. Google Drive is a free service that provides users with 15 GB to start and the option to upgrade to 100 GB for \$1.99 a month. They recently required downloading additional apps (free) if desiring to edit on mobile devices.

ICLOUD

If you like writing with your iPad, iCloud is a great resource that syncs and stores documents created in the Pages, Numbers, or Keynote apps. It will sync between devices, no longer requiring Pages users to sync via another cloud service. iCloud starts with 5 GB of space, something that can be monitored and modified via any linked device. If you have an iPad but don't have a MAC, don't stress. iCloud can be downloaded and used via PC computers as well. You do have to have an Apple ID to use this service.

ONENOTE and ONEDRIVE

Both powered by Microsoft, these two options work together, yet serve separate purposes. OneDrive is where you can upload photos, documents, etc. while OneNote allows you to take notes, via typing or using your finger or stylus to write the notes on your touch screen. Both still have sharing options,

and will sync progress. All users start with 7 GB and the possibility to add another 8 GB with a few easy steps.

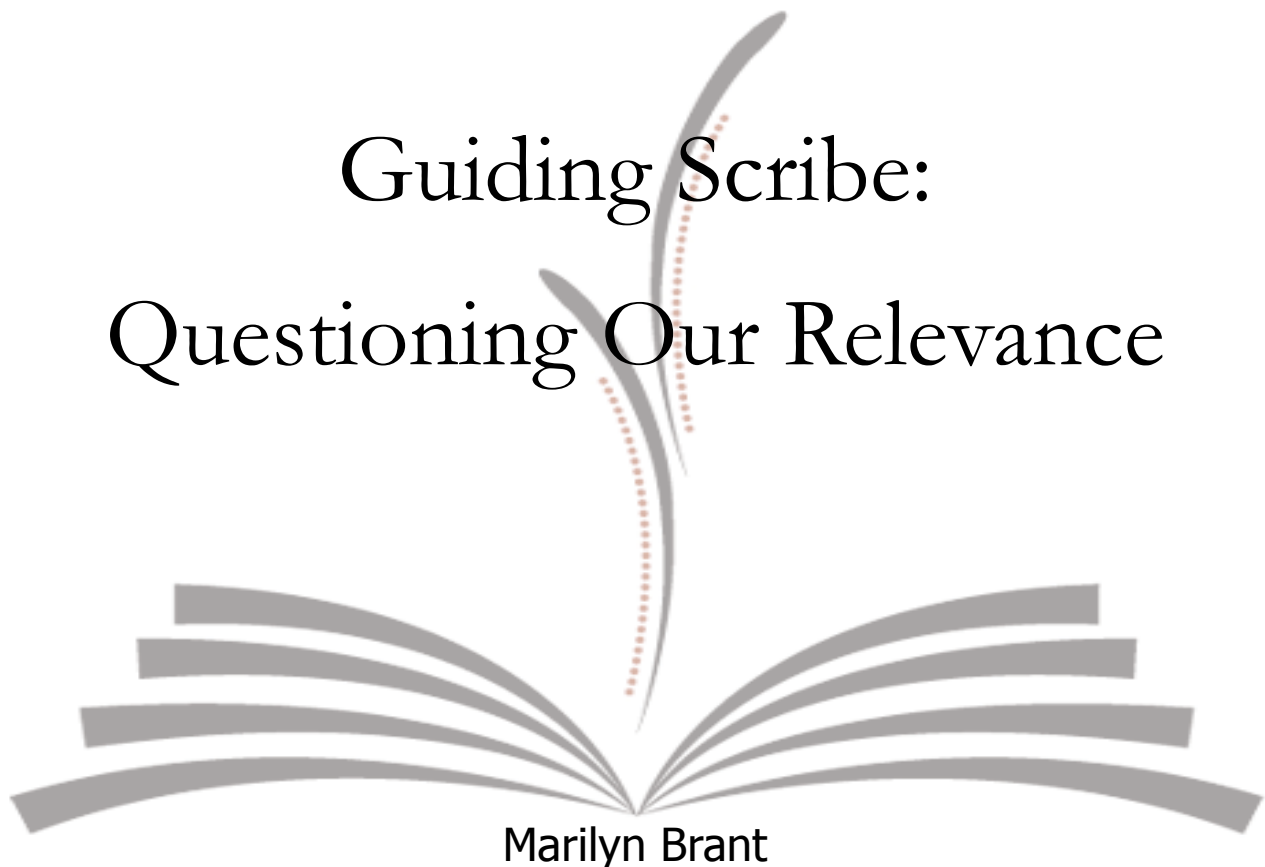
BACK IT UP

If you have been doing anything on computers for any amount of time, you have heard the mantra, "Back it up, back it up, back it up." Certainly you have experienced the panic of a thunderstorm (or child storm) that suddenly makes the pages full of beautiful words disappear. These cloud services give writers many options for storing works in progress, several of which will save to the designated cloud location automatically as you are working. •



TASHA SEEGMILLER (pronounced T + ash + a S + egg + miller) is a high school English teacher in Southern Utah for part of the day, mom to three for the rest, and writes contemporary women's fiction with a dash of magic. She loves owls, runs on Diet Coke, chocolate and cinnamon bears, and a life immersed in words. You can find her at www.tashaseegmiller.blogspot.com.

Guiding Scribe: Questioning Our Relevance



Marilyn Brant

Back in the summer of 2011, I had just released my very first self-published ebook—a light romantic comedy called *On Any Given Sundae*. It was an experiment I'd embarked on primarily as a promotional tool to complement my traditional women's fiction career and because, after listening to all the "going indie" rumblings online and off, I realized the process was so intricate and involved that I'd need to just try it myself if I wanted to understand it.

The results were surprising to me. A combination of intriguing, terrifying, exciting, and worrisome. Then again, just about everything in my publishing experience fit that description... I was getting used to "anxiously enthusiastic" being my default setting as an author. A couple of my women's fiction writer friends and fellow members of the Girlfriends Book Club asked me to share my thoughts about it all, so I wrote an essay back then called "Questioning Our Relevance: Fear, Change and the Digital Revolution."

In rereading it this week—three summers later—I could see that, although we may be a few steps further down the path, the dust still hasn't settled and our industry is still in the midst of a major upheaval. So, I thought I'd share that essay with you all in hopes that it will prove helpful, and to add this postscript: I've released one traditionally published novel and a half dozen self-published stories since I wrote this piece below, and I've enjoyed being a part of both worlds over these past few years. Through it all, however, my conclusion remains the same.

Happy summer!

This is a pretty unsettling time in the publishing industry.

No matter what your opinions are regarding what constitutes a book or who qualifies as an author, changes like the bankruptcy of Borders, the shrinking of print runs and the explosion of digital-

only or digital-first releases (both self-published and through major NY houses, such as Bantam's revitalized "Loveswept" line or Avon's new "Impulse" line) have been wreaking havoc on the professional lives of booksellers, publishers, editors, agents and writers alike.

There is some very real excitement out there, too, by the way. New opportunities are emerging almost hourly, and many entrepreneurial souls have been quick to hop aboard the digital train in hopes of striking gold. Some have found it in the literary realm and are shouting their gratitude and their Amazon rankings from the rooftops. Others are still striving and hopeful and secretly trying to crack the algorithm for ebook bestsellerdom. And yet others are capitalizing on the author accessories needed for a successful digital experience—the creation of book covers, the proofreading skills, the uploading and conversion know-how.

In my opinion, More Opportunities + More Choices = Something Good. I may not utilize every service available to me out there, but I love having options. Getting to self-publish a few of my light romantic comedies alongside my traditionally published women's fiction has been both an interesting venture and a fun one. But then, I'm a big fan of a good Asian buffet, too. You tell me I can have Thai satays and Chinese egg rolls and Japanese teriyaki chicken and Mongolian barbecued beef...all on my plate at once? What's not to love about that?!

Food fantasies aside, though, I'm also an observer by nature, and I've been watching and listening to everyone. Attentively. I've been reading their posts and their tweets and their messages. And for every public comment that unabashedly praises the Digital Revolution, there are at least five more—ranging from whispered concerns to infuriated accusations—that express in some way a powerful and pervasive sense of fear.

For me, trying to uncover the source of that fear has been occupying a lot of my mental energy this summer. Best I can figure, I think it comes down to a persistent questioning of our relevance and how well we think we'll fare in the publishing world of the future.

Whether our job is that of an author or an agent,

an editor or a bookseller, we're united by worries about what these changes mean and who we are now if the original hierarchy and gate-keeping system we'd grown accustomed to is no longer in effect. Where is our industry going? Will readers abandon paper books in order to make the digital leap? Will the skills we've all worked so laboriously to acquire be relevant in this evolving publishing landscape? And, even if we fully embrace the lightning-like changes that have struck publishing hard in recent years, will we be able to roll with whatever comes next in an industry that has transformed so rapidly in such a short period of time?

Just about everyone I know is asking themselves some version of these questions. Publishers are wondering if they need to add a digital branch to their company or expand the one they already have. Literary agents are fielding a slew of queries from their clients about rights reversion or assistance in the self-publishing of backlists. Writers across the genres are wrestling with the decision of whether or not to dip their toes in the digital waters and, if they do it, then they're struggling to adjust to a different method of manuscript formatting and online marketing and the panic/elation of having daily updates on their sales numbers. Brick-and-mortar booksellers aren't sure where to go next or how to use their valuable skills.

To top it off, there's a social-media windstorm brewing around all of us, amplifying the collective fear and setting off an onslaught of comparisons between authors. (Whose downloads are higher?) Or between publishing professionals. (Whose services or distribution methods are better?)

It's been kind of exhausting.

So, I wanted to brush all the discord and confusion away for just a moment and say, à la Oprah, the one thing I know for sure... It's something I bet you know, too: Yes, change is hard (and frustrating and scary and, sometimes, exciting), but there will always be a need for stories. And what drives us to read those stories—whether it's to feel that sense of connection with others, to be entertained, to escape, to learn something new—that part is constant. That part will always be relevant.

I think we need to hang tight to this truth until the dust settles, even as we learn new skills and face

the challenges that come with navigating our careers in this ever-shifting publishing environment and this not-exactly-stable global economy. How stories will be packaged, sold and delivered in five years or ten is still a point of some debate, and I suspect many of us are going to have to adjust far more than we may feel comfortable doing (sigh), but the craving for stories will live on. No revolution—digital or otherwise—will change that.



MARILYN BRANT is the *USA Today* bestselling author of *According to Jane*, *Friday Mornings at Nine*, and *A Summer in Europe*. She's also a #1 Kindle and #1 Nook bestseller and has written a series of fun and flirty contemporary romantic comedies, available exclusively as original ebooks. Two of these, *On Any Given Sundae* and *Pride, Prejudice and the Perfect Match*, have hit both Barnes & Noble's and Amazon's Top 100 Bestseller Lists. Her coming-of-age romantic mystery, *The Road to You*, was released in October 2013, and she contributed the novella "All About Us" to the new-adult romance anthology *All I Ever Wanted*. Her next release will be the sequel to 'Perfect Match'—*Pride, Prejudice and the Perfect Bet* coming out Summer of 2014. Visit her at www.marilynbrant.com.

About the GUIDING SCRIBE Position

The Guiding Scribe serves as the respected guiding voice within the Association. S/he is published in Women's Fiction and provides advice to members and the Board about topics related to the genre of Women's Fiction.

Fun Challenge

Remember last issue's fun challenge?

FINISH THIS SENTENCE:

I write because..

Here's our chosen reader response, written by **Laura Drake**:

I write because I always learn more about what i think when it comes out on the page.

Now onto the Next Challenge!

Share with us the opening sentence from one of your published works, your WIP, or a favorite work of Women's Fiction. (Don't forget to tell us where it's from!)

Send your response
(in 150 words or less)
to Reese Leyva at

writeon@womensfictionwriters.org

and you may find your
submission published
in our next e-zine.

Thanks for playing!



WOMEN'S FICTION
WRITERS ASSOCIATION