

# Write On!

Quarterly Magazine of the  
Women's Fiction Writers Association  
WINTER 2015

## Self-Editing

How I Removed the Awe and  
Aww from Self Editing  
by Amy Sue Nathan

## Women's Fiction in Today's Market

Agent Kevan Lyon on  
Surviving and Thriving

## All About Community for Writers



# 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](http://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](http://www.jessyferguson.blogspot.com).

## MANAGING EDITOR

Orly Konig-Lopez is the Founding President of WFWA and a member of the Writers in the Storm blog. After years of pushing the creativity boundary in corporate communications, Orly decided it was time for a new challenge. Three women's fiction manuscripts later (plus a handful of picture books), it's safe to say she's found her creative outlet. Her manuscripts have placed in numerous writing contests. Find her at [www.orkoniglopez.com](http://www.orkoniglopez.com).

## COLUMNS EDITOR

**Tasha Seegmiller** (T + ash + a S + egg + miller) Tasha Seegmiller is a mom to three kids and high school English teacher in Southern Utah. She writes contemporary women's fiction with a dash of magic. Her loves include Diet Coke, owls, chocolate and cinnamon bears. She is a founder of and contributor to Thinking Through Our Fingers, and can be found at [tashaseegmiller.blogspot.com](http://tashaseegmiller.blogspot.com).

## CONTRIBUTING 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 She's written hundreds of poems, several short films, a novella, a full-length stage play, and an unpublished novel.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](http://www.reeseleyva.com).


## LAYOUT EDITOR

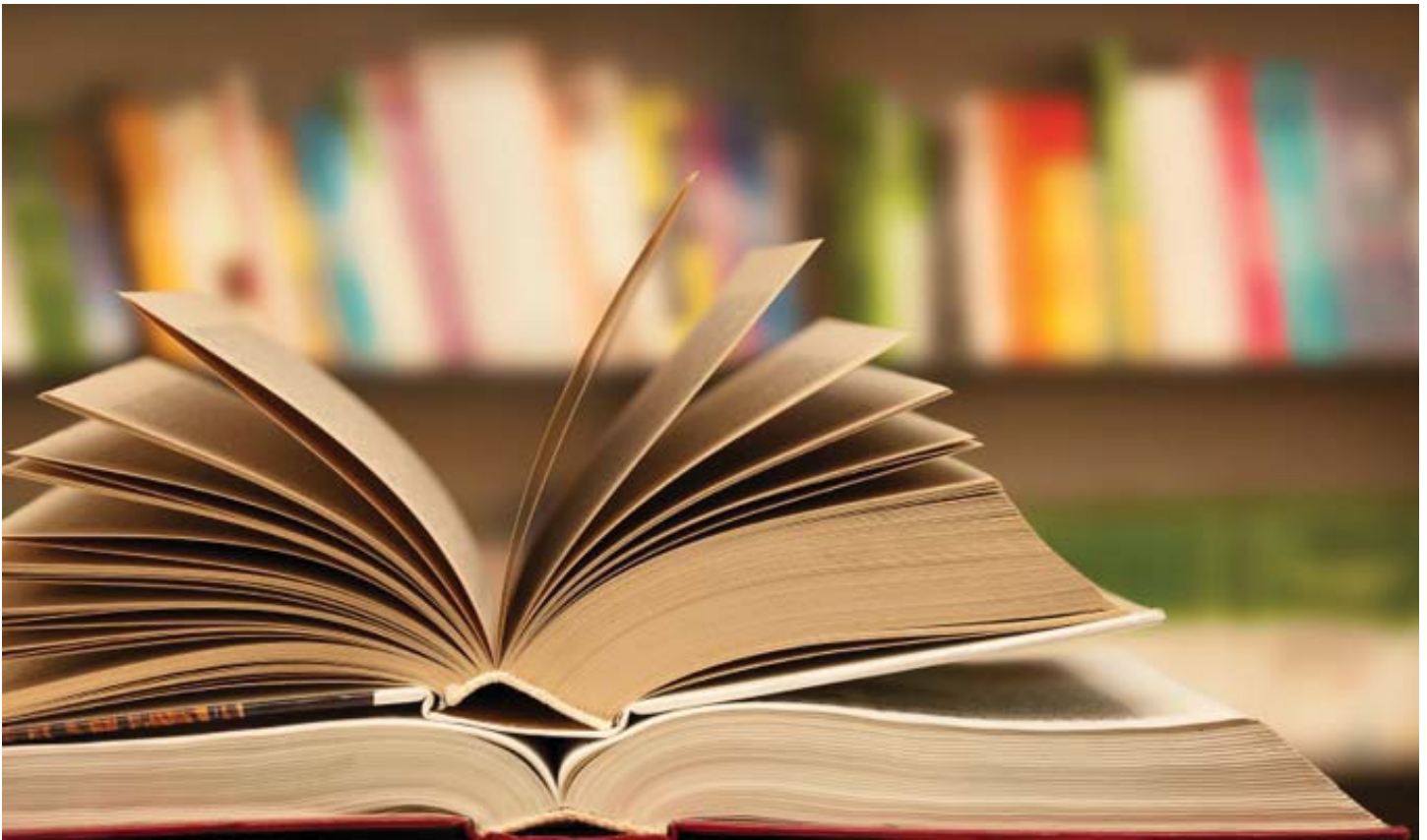
**Sierra Godfrey** writes fiction with international settings and always a mention of football (soccer) or two. She is a graphic designer with a soft spot for magazine layout, and a sports writer covering La Liga for Football.com. She lives in the foggy wastelands of the San Francisco Bay Area with her family and can be found at [www.sierragodfrey.com](http://www.sierragodfrey.com).

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# President's Note



Happy 2015!

When the founding members first discussed the building blocks of this organization, the first order of business was agreeing on a definition for women's fiction. An impossible task?

There were times we thought so, too. After much discussion we agreed on:

*Stories about a woman's emotional journey.*

And for a while, it seemed like that definition was working.

But like all organizations, growth means changes. Less than a year and a half later, WFWA has **grown to over 500 members** and the elasticity of the definition was being tested.

The board took that challenge and tweaked the definition, broadening the scope to better cover the range of our membership:

*Stories that are driven by the main character's emotional journey.*

Much of what we consider women's fiction includes family drama and main characters who are on the verge of adulthood but dealing with adult issues.

Each time the board has been faced with deciding if a manuscript falls in women's fiction genre, we've used the following two questions:

1. Is the story driven by the main character's emotional journey? If the romance is the driving force, then no. If the story is driven by solving a mystery, then no.
2. Where would it be shelved in a bookstore or what category would it be entered in a contest?

Does it fit in the thriller section? Then it's probably not women's fiction. If it were entered in the young adult category, then it's not women's fiction.

The board feels this broader umbrella will better serve our growing membership but still allow for a tight genre-based organization. It's exciting to see WFWA grow and the board continues to look for ways to increase member benefits.

If you have suggestions for programs, ideas of how we can improve, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Write On!

Orly

[orly@oklopez.com](mailto:orly@oklopez.com)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Orly Lopez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

## 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:

*Stories that are driven by the main character'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!**

### The WFWA Founding Team

Orly Konig-Lopez	<a href="http://www.orkoniglopez.com">www.orkoniglopez.com</a>
Kerry Lonsdale	<a href="http://www.kerrylonsdale.com">www.kerrylonsdale.com</a>
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Marilyn Brant	<a href="http://www.marilynbrant.com">www.marilynbrant.com</a>
Maggie Marr	<a href="http://www.maggiemarr.com">www.maggiemarr.com</a>

## 2015 WFWA Board of Directors

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Maggie Marr  
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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.



# How I Removed the *Awe* and *Aww* from Self-Editing

Amy Sue Nathan

I often question my writing, judge my prose, belittle my word choices, and doubt my plot points. Some days I love what I've written.

The "disbelieving me" is in awe of the time and effort it will take to get from first draft to final draft. The "believing me" might think, "Aww, this is so good it doesn't need to be changed."

No! To both.

I must self-edit.

I also must strike a balance where I am confident in my work but know it needs work.

Whether it's the first time or the hundredth time, self-editing can be daunting. At least it can be for me. I stare at the monitor and all these little black shapes stare back at me. Just looking at them is exhausting.

I know myself. I self-edit differently than I write. I'm a binge writer, but a bit-by-bit editor. Not that I can't, or haven't, edited for hours, but I can also edit a paragraph, then leave for an appointment or to do the dishes.

Oh, who am I kidding? I do not stop editing to do the dishes.

But I do stop if I'm overwhelmed.

The key here is not to get overwhelmed.

## First Drafts

My first drafts are embarrassing. I write in sentence fragments and run-ons. But what I have when I'm finished, I hope, is the beginning, middle, and end of a chapter, the right idea to build upon. I write light in first drafts. That means I know I'm going to go in again to flesh out ideas. Many of my friends write 125,000 word first drafts they edit down to 90,000 words. My finished first drafts are about 50,000 words. I edit up. No matter how you work, some of these tips might work for you to take the sting out of first draft editing.

1. **Do it quickly.** Later I'll advocate stepping away, but with a first draft I want to capitalize on my momentum. I'll write a scene or chapter and go back and self-edit the same day. Sometimes, same hour.
2. **Don't look back.** For this draft I just go back in and change things with no mind

to what was there before. I don't want to remember the dreck; I want to revise it.

3. **Dump what doesn't work.** I elaborate on my sentence fragments and cull my run-ons. I spy "something like purple but not" and write lavender or periwinkle.
4. **Decide what does works.** Or what doesn't. This is usually the time I get a gut feeling if the names I'm using really work for me. I also get a feeling about characters and if I need them. I want to move forward writing about what's necessary.
5. **Dialogue, dialogue, dialogue.** This is where I clean it up. No one's cursing (well, maybe a little), but in a first draft I type so fast I don't always use proper formatting. I want to GET IT OUT. So I go back and tidy up. Appearances are everything (you'll see why later).
6. **Define the path.** Is there a beginning, middle, and end of the chapter? If something's missing, I don't write it—I make a note that it's missing. Does the chapter ending leave a question or cliffhanger? If not, I consider how to make the chapter end so that the reader must turn the page. Have I buried anything in overwriting exuberance? (Who, me?)

My first draft isn't really finished until it's self-edited. Until I know someone else could read it and make sense of it, even with the weaknesses and holes. I call it my finished first draft. Before that, you don't want to know what I call it.

## Second Drafts (Or, to Infinity—and Beyond)

I have never counted drafts. Let's say that with each of my novels (published, soon-to-be published, and under-the-bed) I've written more than two drafts and fewer than a hundred.

This, for me, is where fine-tuning begins and where I remember the best advice/joke I ever told my daughter.

"How do you eat an elephant?"

"One bite at a time."

If I looked at a whole manuscript and imagined editing the whole thing on my own, I'd crawl under this bed I call an office and that would be that. But because I write, and edit, my novels a chapter at a time, at first, it's more manageable to me. For the time being I pretend that's all I need to worry about, which allows me to focus (i.e., which eliminates panic).

1. **Print out pages.** Whether I've written the whole book or not, I print out one chapter. If you're not a paper person, this is where I'd use track changes.
2. **Get your hands dirty.** Yes, I use multi-colored markers. Yes, they end up on my hands. When I do Track Changes, I go into the options and make all the different kinds of changes different colors. Makes it fun.
3. **One Bite at a Time.** I go paragraph by paragraph and polish so that what's going on there makes sense to me, and is tightly written, but I don't go overboard. This is where I'd rather have too much than too little. This is where I start my editing up.
4. **Read aloud.** Especially dialogue. I tend to use characters' names in dialogue until I edit it. I also use a lot of "Well." Because, well, I just do. Reading aloud helps me catch all these unnecessary bits.
5. **Lay it out.** I look at chapters by laying the pages side by side on my dining room table. I look for visual cues. Do the paragraphs all start with the same word? (A no-no.) Are the sentences and paragraphs the same lengths page after page? How long are the dialogue runs? These are things you can consider when revising, because variations make stories more interesting.

## Final Drafts

Final drafts take many forms. I have final drafts for my critique partner, then for my agent, and then for my editor. If you're not hiring an editor (silent scream) and you're self-publishing then your

final draft is for your reader.

For me, this is the detail and danger zone. This is where I nit-pick and where I am usually convinced that all my time and effort and energy has resulted in a big pile of poo. Luckily, this is normal. And that's why I start with the hardest thing of all.

1. **Step away.** Unless I'm right up against a deadline, I leave the manuscript untouched for days or weeks if possible. This provides perspective. If I have an epiphany (in the shower or while driving, 'natch) I write it down but don't open the Word doc.
2. **Go slow.** When it's time to get back to work, I start again by tackling one chapter at a time. I read for content and clarity. I circle or highlight what I need to come back to.
3. **Be honest.** I note overused words and clichés. No one is above using them. Now is the time to get rid of them. Then, I do a search for any crutch words. Every writer has them. I use "and" more times than should be legal. I also make note of lingo and colloquialisms that might not work if the publication of the book was delayed, or if someone reads the book in five years. With backlists readily available as ebooks for both traditionally and self-published authors, this is a real concern. Here's a list of ["banished words"](#) from Lake Superior State University. This is a list of [overused words and phrases](#) at Write Divas. I'm not affiliated with either site, but these lists are comprehensive and helpful (and fun to read).

The best thing about self-editing, is that it's not the end—it's just the beginning. This is how I get my writing ready for others to critique and edit it. Yes, at some point, it's finished, but you shouldn't be the only person editing your work if you want it read by others. If you want people to pay to read it.

Beta readers and critique partners, agents and editors will not only help your story, but their

feedback will bolster your ability to self-edit in the future. Self-editing is the gift that keeps on giving.

By that I mean giving us headaches, some heartache—as well as the opportunity to be the best writers we can be. •



**Amy Sue Nathan** is the author *The Good Neighbor* (St. Martin's Press, December 2015) and *The Glass Wives* (St. Martin's Press, May 2013) and dozens of articles, essays, and stories published in the *Chicago Tribune*, *Printers Row Journal*, *Chicago Parent*, *Huffington Post*, and the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* online, among many others. She teaches workshops for Writer's Digest University, works as a freelance writer and editor, and hosts the Women's Fiction Writers blog, where she has interviewed more than 150 women's fiction authors since 2011. Amy grew up in Philadelphia and is a graduate of Temple University with a degree in Journalism (which she actually uses). Amy lives near Chicago, has two grown children, two senior dogs, and is busy writing her third novel.

# The 2015 Rising Star Contest



The 2014 Rising Star Contest blew us away: from the generous support of the published authors who volunteered to judge the first round, to the stellar agents who stepped up as final round judges, to the speed at which we maxed the number of entries, and the quality of the entries submitted. Each of the five finalists received a request for a full from at least one agent!

Now it's time to look ahead at the 2015 contest.

## Key dates:

- *Contest Opens:* May 1, 2015 for WFWA members; May 8 for non-members, space permitting
- *Entry Deadline:* May 15, 2015
- *Finalists Announced:* July 24, 2015
- *Edited Finalist Entries Due:* August 1, 2015
- *Winners Announced:* September 26, 2015 during the WFWA Retreat

## Final round judges:

- Katie Shea Boutillier, Donald Maass Literary Agency
- Susan Brower, Natasha Kern Literary Agency
- Sarah LaPolla, Bradford Literary Agency
- Marlene Stringer, Stringer Literary Agency
- Carly Watters, P.S. Literary Agency

If you are a published author ... please consider volunteering to be a first round judge.

[Find the full rules and guidelines on our website.](#)

# First Annual WFWA Writer's Retreat!



Get ready!

The first WFWA retreat will be held September 24-27, 2015 in Albuquerque, New Mexico at the Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town.

We wanted to make the WFWA Retreat a craft and networking event, an opportunity to talk about women's fiction, exchange ideas, commiserate over the headaches and heartaches, and celebrate the joys and successes. It'll be a weekend for connecting with like-minded writers.

Discussion sessions are for sharing ideas. Each discussion will have a topic leader but they won't be standing at a podium talking to you. They'll be sitting at a table talking with you. Regardless of where you are in the writing/publishing process, you have questions and experiences to share.

And, of course, writing. After all, what's a retreat without some quality writing time? You'll have opportunities to apply what you've learned, whether you choose to write in your room, in a cozy nook around the hotel, or in the writing sprint room with fellow WFWAers.

**Registration is now open!**

[Visit the retreat page on our site.](#)

# The WFWA Roundtable

with Jessica Ferguson



**H**appy 2015! You may have noticed that we are no longer the WFWA Café. Now we're calling ourselves the Writer's Roundtable, so don't look confused, you're in the right place. Gather 'round, Brenda Beagley, Maggie Giles, Kimberly Belle, Erin Leary, and Nicole Evelina. I've ordered everyone a Nonfat Caramel Macchiato, only 140 calories—my treat. We haven't seen each other since before the holidays so let's celebrate! But first, let's talk writing.

Brenda, start us off. What writing related gift did you get for Christmas?

**Brenda:** A break from writing and social media during the week of Christmas—hubby surprised me with a trip to Phoenix.

**Maggie:** Quiet time to write!!

**Kimberly:** Nuthin'. But I did buy myself a coffee mug that says, "SHUT UP. I'm writing."

**Erin:** A weekend trip for writing with my best friend.

**Nicole:** A tote bag that says Keep Calm and Edit On!

**Jess:** One of my favorite movies is *Under the*

*Tuscan Sun*. If I could live anywhere in the world to write my next novel, I think I'd escape to a villa in Tuscany. Where would you live, Brenda?

**Brenda:** On a ranch or a farm.

**Jess:** There's nothing like hearing horses whinnying across the pastures and picking apples off your very own apple tree. How about you, Maggie?

**Maggie:** Country side of England, preferably a castle. Maybe Hever Castle.

**Kimberly:** Uh, Amsterdam? Because that's where I am until June, and if all goes as planned, I'll be finishing up novel #3 here this spring.

**Jess:** Amsterdam! I was bumped from my flight from Scotland a few years ago and spent a night in Amsterdam. Good shopping at their beautiful airport.

**Erin:** Australia—near Sydney.

**Nicole:** Since my next two novels are set in France, I would say the French countryside, probably around Provence. But a little garret in Paris would be cool, too!

**Jess:** When it comes to encouragement, it

always helps to have our family on our side. How does your spouse and everyone in the house support your writing?

**Brenda:** I'm always on deadline, but if I'm having trouble with a book, hubby will take over the cooking. And since I need a quiet house to write, hubby's always willing to go golfing on Saturday or Sunday so I have my peace and quiet—amazing the sacrifices husbands make when their wives are writers! :-)

**Maggie:** He lets me read it to him.

**Jess:** Ohhhh, Maggie, romantic. Very Jane Austin Book Club-ish!

**Kimberly:** I just posted an article on FB about this issue. I'm one of the husband-sponsored writers, both emotionally and financially, and I consider myself blessed. My kids are proud but maybe a tad less understanding, especially when deadlines interfere with their meals.

**Jess:** Thanks for sharing, Kimberly. I read that piece too. I recently interviewed a woman who lives and writes in a nursing home. Her story sure makes me feel spoiled but thankful for my husband-sponsored writing life. How about you, Erin? How does your family support you?

**Erin:** They leave me alone when I am in my office, they read my work, they tell me to keep at it.

**Nicole:** I don't have any of those. But my parents are supportive in their belief in my talent. My mom is also one of two alpha readers and she cooks meals for me when I'm heavy into writing so I don't have to think to eat.

**Jess:** My fondest fantasy is that my husband will develop an overwhelming desire to learn to cook. Let's move on to our next question. I can't wait to hear your answers. What is your biggest writing related accomplishment in 2014?

**Brenda:** I've been writing series romance for Harlequin American Romance since 2006 and in 2014 I was able to sell my first women's fiction novel in a two-book deal to Penguin-NAL Trade.

**Maggie:** COMPLETED MY NOVEL

**Jess:** Maggie, use your inside voice! Or not.

That is something to be excited about. :)

**Kimberly:** My debut, *The Last Breath*, was released in September from Harlequin MIRA.

**Erin:** Submitting my WIP to an agent and not having it be rejected yet!

**Jess:** Fingers crossed, Erin.

**Nicole:** Writing three books in one year along with having a full-time job!

**Jess:** I can't help but think of Ziz Ziglar's quote: "What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals." I wonder how your success made you feel, or changed you. Every goal I achieve, every deadline I meet gives me more confidence as a writer. But let's talk about our goals for 2015. We have a new year staring us in the face. Brenda?

**Brenda:** Get lots of writing done, work on developing a women's fiction platform, exercise consistently, and explore Houston and the surrounding area.

**Maggie:** Complete two more novels, find an agent, get published!!

**Kimberly:** Finish and sell book number 3, begin number 4. I'd also love to do some kind of retreat, either an immersion with Margie Lawson or a plotting workshop. Recommendations are welcome!

**Erin:** Keep at it!

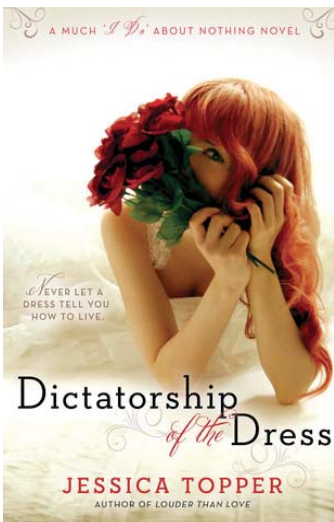
**Nicole:** 1) Write at least one more book, but chances are that will turn into three. 2) Write and submit a short story for an anthology. 3) Continue weekly blogging and regular social media use. 4) Get a new agent. 5) Get published!

And there we have it: a successful 2014 and serious goals and dreams for the coming year. Napoleon Hill said, "There is one quality which one must possess to win, and that is definiteness of purpose, the knowledge of what one wants, and a burning desire to possess it."

Obviously, we know what we want. Lord, grant us the burning desire to possess it! •

# Member News

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



## **Dictatorship of the Dress (Much "I Do" About Nothing #1)**

**By Jessica Topper**

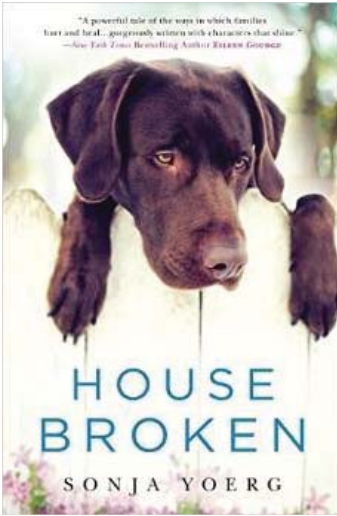
**Release Date: January 6, 2015**

As the dress-bearer for her mother's wedding, comic book artist Laney Hudson has a lot more baggage than the bulky garment bag she's lugging from New York to Hawaii. Running chores for her mom's fairytale nuptials is proving to be a painfully constant reminder of her own lost love.

Mistaken for the bride, she's bumped to first class, figuring some stress-free luxury is worth a harmless white lie. But the flight crew thinks that the man sitting next to her is the groom, and her little fib turns into a hot mess.

The last thing Noah Ridgewood needs is some dress-obsessed diva landing in his first-class row. En route to his Vegas bachelor party, the straight-laced software designer knows his cold feet have nothing to do with the winter weather.

When a severe storm leaves them grounded in Chicago and they find themselves booked into the last available honeymoon suite, Laney and her in-flight neighbor have little choice but to get better acquainted. Now, as her bridal mission hangs in the balance, perhaps the thing Laney gets right is a second chance at love.

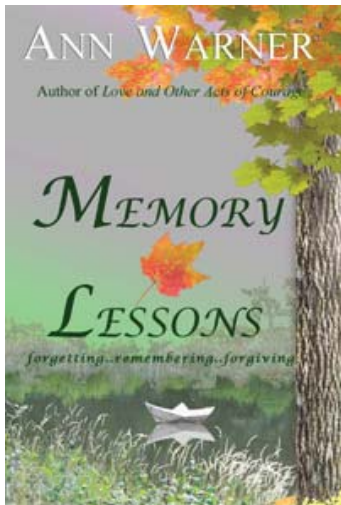


**House Broken**  
**By Sonja Yoerg**  
**Release Date: September 30, 2014**

For veterinarian Geneva Novak, animals can be easier to understand than people. They're also easier to forgive. But when her mother, Helen, is injured in a vodka-fueled accident, it's up to Geneva to give her the care she needs.

Since her teens, Geneva has kept her self-destructive mother at arm's length. Now, with two slippery teenagers of her own at home, the last thing she wants is to add Helen to the mix. But Geneva's husband convinces her that letting Helen live with them could be her golden chance to repair their relationship.

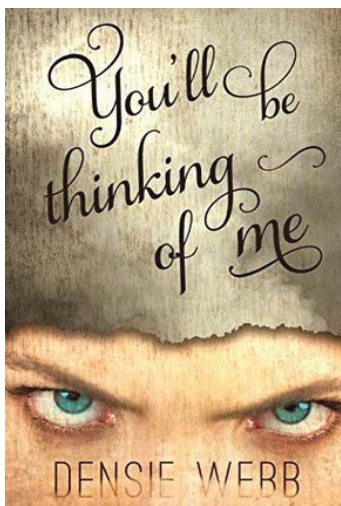
Geneva isn't expecting her mother to change anytime soon, but she may finally get answers to the questions she's been asking for so long. As the truth about her family unfolds, however, Geneva may find secrets too painful to bear and too terrible to forgive.



**Memory Lessons**  
**by Ann Warner**  
**Release date: January 6, 2015**

Glenna Girard has passed through the agony and utter darkness of an unimaginable loss. It is only in planning her escape, from her marriage and her current circumstances, that she manages to start moving again, toward a place where she can live in anonymity and atone for what she has done.

As she takes tentative steps into the new life she is so carefully shaping, she encounters a family that, without her intervention, will face a loss as profound and devastating as Glenna's own. Ultimately, all of them will learn that choosing to love, to remember, and to forgive is more powerful than forgetting.

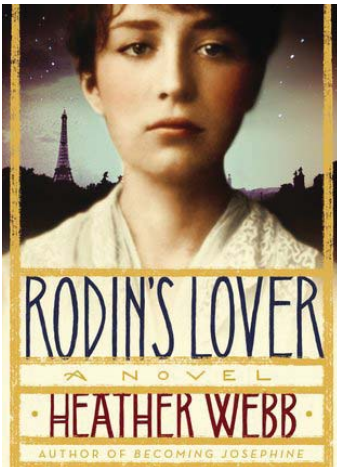


**You'll Be Thinking of Me**  
**by Densie Webb**  
**Release date: January 12, 2015**

A chance encounter with a celebrity, an impromptu video, and a shiny new espresso machine. It all added up to a juicy tale for 24-year-old Rachael Allen to share with friends. But when her best friend posts the video online, bizarre threats, home break-ins, and deadly gifts from an obsessed fan follow close behind.

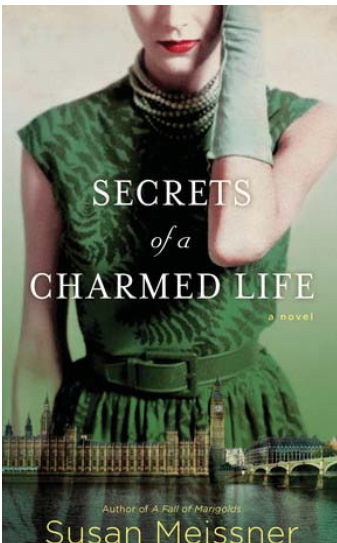
Mick Sullivan, the star in her video, offers to help and in the process, Rachael discovers that despite his reputation as a player of Olympian caliber, he's down-to-earth—and emotionally damaged. He has secrets; some he's shared only with his pseudo best friend. Others he's shared with no one. But there's one secret he's hidden from himself, washed away by too many beers. Despite wildly divergent life paths, their shared Southern upbringing (and a passion for good music) creates a common thread that draws them together.

As the threats escalate and their relationship deepens, Rachael struggles to accept Mick's past—and his present. And she is forced to confront her own obsessive love to ultimately decide if being with Mick Sullivan is worth the collateral damage.



**Rodin's Lover**  
by Heather Webb  
Release date: January 27, 2015

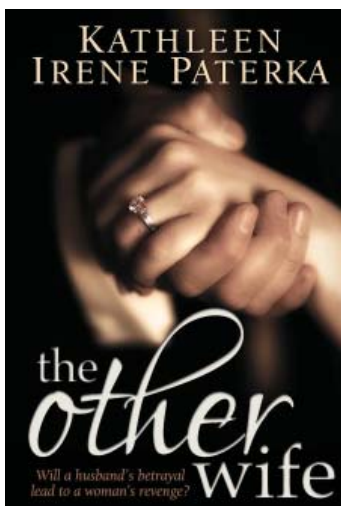
As a woman, aspiring sculptor Camille Claudel has plenty of critics, especially her ultra-traditional mother. But when Auguste Rodin makes Camille his apprentice—and his muse—their passion inspires groundbreaking works. Yet, Camille's success is overshadowed by her lover's rising star, and her obsessions cross the line into madness.



**Secrets of a Charmed Life**  
by Susan Meissner  
Release date: February 3, 2015

Current day, Oxford, England. Young American scholar Kendra Van Zant, eager to pursue her vision of a perfect life, interviews Isabel McFarland just when the elderly woman is ready to give up secrets about the war that she has kept for decades . . . beginning with who she really is. What Kendra receives from Isabel is both a gift and a burden—one that will test her convictions and her heart.

1940s, England. As Hitler wages an unprecedented war against London's civilian population, one million children are evacuated to foster homes in the rural countryside. Fifteen-year-old Emmy Downtree and her much younger sister Julia find refuge in a charming Cotswold cottage. But Emmy's burning ambition to return to the city and apprentice with a fashion designer pits her against Julia's profound need for her sister's presence. Acting at cross purposes just as the Luftwaffe rains down its terrible destruction, the sisters are cruelly separated, and their lives are transformed.

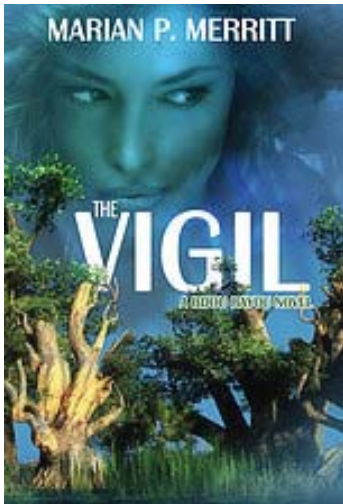


**The Other Wife**  
by Kathleen Irene Paterka  
Release date: February 18, 2015

Eleanor Anderson has a beautiful home, a loving husband, a tranquil life. After thirty-eight years of marriage and her children now grown, she finally has time for herself. She's not expecting any surprises; certainly not to wake up one morning and find her husband dead in bed beside her from a massive heart attack. It's a devastating discover . . . but not as much as the shock awaiting Eleanor when she learns the truth about her husband's secret life. And then there's the damaging document he signed before his death, which threatens to destroy her life.

Claire Anderson isn't your average thirtysomething. A professor of psychology at a prestigious university, Claire has a successful career, a handsome husband, and two young children at home. But nothing in her background, including her academic accomplishments, prepares Claire for the horrendous reality of discovering that the life she'd led was all a lie . . . fostered by a husband who'd promised to love and cherish her forever.

Two women from two generations, bound together by denial, anger, and grief. How far will their misery and fear push them? Does compassion rule the day, or will a husband's betrayal lead to a woman's revenge? What happens when each of these women comes face-to-face with the other wife?



**The Vigil**  
by Marian P. Merritt  
Release date: February 20, 2015

Cheryl Broussard made two vows: She'd never fall for an abusive man, and she'd never return to her Louisiana hometown. But she's learned all too well the lesson of never-say-never. Now, back in Bijou Bayou after fleeing from an abusive boyfriend, Cheryl finds work as a Hospice nurse. While reading a dying patient's Korean War love letters, family secrets shatter Cheryl's beliefs about her family and herself, and shed light on the reason she fled her hometown. When the Broussard family secrets are revealed, can Cheryl deal with the truth and accept the blessing of a second chance for relationships with her family, old friends, and with the God she never really knew?

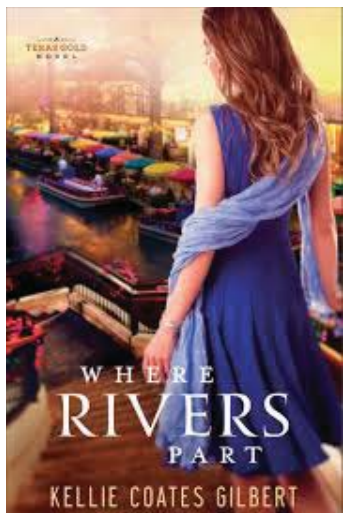


**The Delicate Nature of Love (Zoey Chambers, #1)**  
by Wendy Paine Miller  
Release date: February, 2015

Forty-four-year-old Emma Gates hasn't cared about much in life since becoming a widow two years ago. But then she meets the inquisitive and mercurial Zoey Chambers, her next door neighbor.

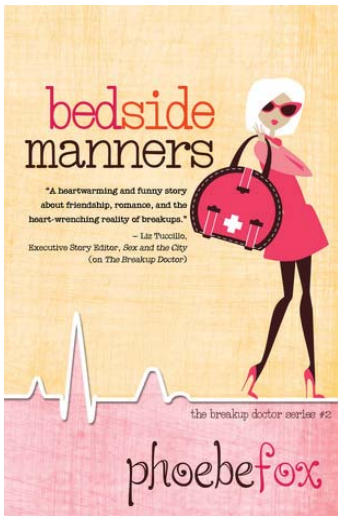
Who happens to be eleven.

Soon after, Emma is introduced to Colby Havelock, a psychology professor who reaches Emma in ways she didn't think were possible again after Max died. Emma considers the possibility of a new life with Colby. But Colby knows something about Zoey he cannot share. Could the eleven-year-old spark who helped Emma heal also be the fire that drives Colby and Emma apart?



**Where Rivers Part**  
by Kellie Coates Gilbert  
February 17, 2015

Following in her estranged father's footsteps, Dr. Juliet Ryan has devoted her scientific acumen to corporate America, providing safe drinking water for millions—and affording her plenty of perks along the way. Then, without warning, a fast-moving disaster sweeps Juliet into a whirlpool of corporate scandal and puts lives at risk. As she scrambles to find answers, Juliet must face her deepest wounds and join forces with her father to expose a far-reaching conspiracy. Underneath it all, she struggles to forgive those who betrayed her trust—not least of all her own father.



## **Bedside Manners (Breakup Doctor #2)**

**by Phoebe Fox**

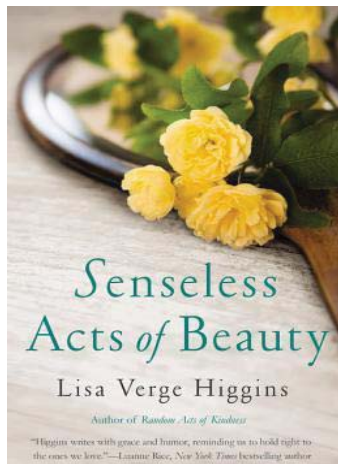
**March 24, 2015**

Brook Ogden has never encountered a broken heart she couldn't patch together. Her counseling practice as the Breakup Doctor—on call to help you shape up after a breakup—is so busy she's expanded to offer group sessions. (Turns out there are far more than fifty ways to leave your lover.) Her radio show and advice column have made her a local celebrity, and even her personal life, after some gruesome breakups of her own, is in recovery: Ben Garrett started out as a revenge date against an ex, but has turned into so much more.

But when sizzling-hot Chip Santana, an old client she once shared a rather unprofessional midnight roll in the sand with, comes back into her life asking for her help, Brook can't say no. Yet while she's busy stitching up his relationship troubles, Chip reveals much more than a therapeutic interest in her.

In the standoff between her heart and her hormones, Brook's cool, collected Wise Therapist persona begins to crack like thrown wedding china. She's yelling at recalcitrant cheating husbands. Offering crazy advice to radio callers. She's even hugging her clients.

When the situation goes critical, Brook's forced into a decision she isn't ready to make—and the Breakup Doctor has to decide what kind of casualties she's willing to accept.

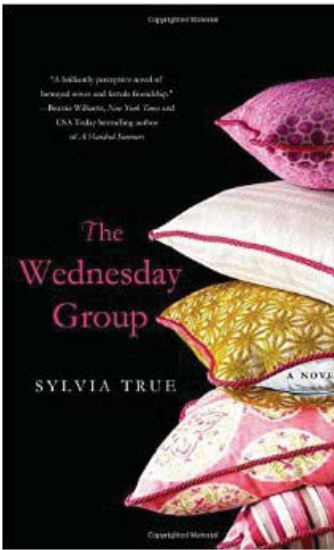


## **Senseless Acts of Beauty**

**by Lisa Verge Higgins**

**March 10, 2015**

Tess has a secret: For fifteen years she has been furtively following the life of the daughter she gave up as an infant for adoption. But when Sadie runs away from home determined to find her birth mother, Tess has no choice but to hunt down the desperate girl in the one place she dreads—Pine Lake, where a terrible, buried secret threatens to destroy them both.



## The Wednesday Group

by Sylvia True

Release date: March 24, 2015

Gail. Hannah. Bridget. Lizzy. Flavia. Each of them has a shameful secret, and each is about to find out that she is not alone.

Gail, a prominent Boston judge, keeps receiving letters from her husband's latest girlfriend, while her husband, a theology professor, claims he's nine-months sober from sex with grad students. Hannah, a homemaker, catches her husband having sex with a male prostitute in a public restroom. Bridget, a psychiatric nurse at a state hospital, is sure she has a loving, doting spouse, until she learns that he is addicted to chat rooms and match-making websites. Lizzy, a high school teacher, is married to a porn addict, who is withdrawn and uninterested in sex with her. Flavia was working at the Boston Public library when someone brought her an article that stated her husband had been arrested for groping a teenage girl on the subway. He must face court, and Flavia must decide if she wants to stay with him. Finally, Kathryn, the young psychologist running the group, has as much at stake as all of the others.

As the women share never-before-uttered secrets and bond over painful truths, they work on coming to terms with their husbands' addictions and developing healthy boundaries for themselves. Meanwhile, their outside lives become more and more intertwined, until, finally, a series of events forces each woman to face her own denial, betrayal, and uncertain future head-on.

When the situation goes critical, Brook's forced into a decision she isn't ready to make—and the Breakup Doctor has to decide what kind of casualties she's willing to accept.

Have something being published between March and June 2015? Please send an email to

[writeon@womensfictionwriters.org](mailto:writeon@womensfictionwriters.org)

We'd LOVE to get your news in the next issue of this magazine!



# Women's Fiction in Today's Market: An Agent Talks about Surviving and Thriving

With agent Kevan Lyon  
of the Marsal Lyon Literary Agency

**W**e hear a lot about the challenges of getting published these days. Writers looking for agents are finding competition stiff. Writers looking for New York contracts are facing tougher odds. And authors looking for increased sales are struggling in a saturated market.

What's a writer to do?

*Write On!* caught up with agent Kevan Lyon, founding partner of the Marsal Lyon Literary Agency, about the industry and what authors can do for their careers.

**WO:** What does it take in today's marketplace to sell a debut women's fiction?

**KL:** In terms of selling to publishers? Editors are definitely "looking" for engaging women's fiction with a marketable "hook." Whether it's "book-club fiction" or pulse pounding suspense, many editors are looking for that possible new star for their list. The challenge is having that story with that very unique hook or story angle that immediately draws a reader's attention. We are always on the lookout for this type of novel with a long list of editors who would love to read. Then the chal-

lenge is finding that one editor (or maybe more!) who love it and have the support of their sales, marketing, and editorial team to offer for the book.

**WO:** We've all heard the horror stories about published authors not being able to place a new manuscript. What advice do you give your clients when they're starting on a new project that hasn't yet found a home?

**KL:** If a published author's option publisher has turned down their next work it may be because their sales track record is not on an upward trajectory, or for whatever reason the new project is just not right for their list. At this stage, with a published author, we are probably selling their editor from a proposal, so often we will work with the publisher to find a direction for a next book that everyone is happy with. However if it is a sales history issue, I will work with the author to identify a story or genre that may be a completely fresh start from what they were writing before. I have had authors write under a new pen name and/or in a new genre. We need a direction that allows a publisher (and their sales staff) to pitch the new book as "all new" and a book that should be treated as debut or a completely fresh start for



the author. Once an author has a published novel track record this can be difficult, but not impossible.

If you're an unpublished client and we didn't sell the first book, you have to be willing to set it aside and move on to the next book. We may be able to come back to the first book at some point, but the key is to persist and keep writing.

**WO:** WFWA member and your client Shelley Noble recently celebrated the launch of her newest novella leading up to the release of the companion novel. We're seeing more and more authors mixing it up. Can you talk about the benefit of publishing novellas prior to the novel release and how you work with your clients on selling/releasing them?

**KL:** I love the opportunity to have authors "mix it up" with their writing in the hopes that they will reach an ever wider audience. A novella may appeal to a new reader with a lower price point (an easy trial price point) and a short story that will introduce the upcoming world and characters that will be featured in the novel. Or it gives fans a glimpse of what is coming and hopefully incents pre-order of the new book. The lower price point and the shorter format can also help to build a digital reader base, which is always an important factor.

**WO:** What about stand-alone novellas or short stories rather than those with characters tied to an upcoming novel?

**KL:** This can certainly work, but it is nice to use novellas or shorts as an opportunity to promote your other work. Ideally there is a strategy to the novella—either you tie into a past series (i.e., a "bonus story" for fans) or it is something that tempts them to read more of the new series. Novellas can take time and they aren't terribly lucrative for the author, so it makes the most sense to make sure there is a strategic marketing angle.

**WO:** Do you think novellas and short stories are a vehicle for attracting new readers or mostly for satisfying existing readers between novel releases?

**KL:** Definitely both!

**WO:** Are novellas being sold as part of the novel contract or an independent sale?

**KL:** We have definitely done both—publishers see the true benefit in the novellas as stories that can bridge a gap between books in a series, thus keeping readers engaged, or as an incentive to pre-order the first book in a new series. We have contracted them along with a new novel, or it comes along at a different point in the series and we may contract for it separately.

**WO:** What are your thoughts about authors writing in multiple genres? How do you counsel your clients to market themselves when writing in different markets?

**KL:** Ideally the genres a client is writing in are compatible and offer some potential crossover opportunities (i.e., many YA writers also write adult fiction). The strategy for each writer is different based on their interests, how quickly they write, and how much they can juggle and commit to in their writing schedule. But it is not easy for writers to make a living, so I am always in favor of strategizing ways that can help authors achieve the goal of writing as a career, if that is what they want.

**WO:** Do you have advice for our aspiring members on what it takes to break into the women's fiction market?

**KL:** This is a tough one—the women's fiction market is one that is difficult to stand out in, and to come up with that very fresh story with that utterly compelling hook. But, that is absolutely what we are looking for, as well as beautiful writing. So,

the advice is what you've heard before—write the best book that you can and polish, polish, polish before you start querying or go on submission!

**WO:** Any final thoughts for our published authors on career longevity?

**KL:** Be prepared to be flexible and take a left turn at some point. There may be more than one way to achieve your dream of writing as a career, and you have to be willing to persist and not give up in spite of a lot of rejection! Write because it is what you must do. It is not a career to take up for financial gain, but it is one that can give a writer enormous pleasure. That first note from a reader that tells you that somehow you may have touched their lives makes it all worthwhile! •



**Kevan Lyon** is a literary agent and partner with Marsal Lyon Literary Agency. With more than 20 years in the publishing business, Kevan brings an informed and unique perspective to her work with clients. Her background on the buying and retail side of publishing affords her helpful insight into the challenging world of retail bookselling and distribution. Kevan handles women's fiction, with an emphasis on commercial women's fiction, young adult, and new adult fiction and all genres of romance. Her client list includes New York Times and USA Today bestselling authors Jennifer Armentrout, Jennifer Probst, Kristen Proby, Molly McAdams, Jennifer Robson, Laura Griffin, Laura Kaye, and several others.

For more information on the agency and their client list, visit their website at [www.MarsalLyonLiteraryAgency.com](http://www.MarsalLyonLiteraryAgency.com), visit their Facebook page, or follow Kevan on Twitter (@KevanLyon).

## Facebook Launch Parties

The Women's Fiction Writers Association hosts quarterly launch parties on the WFWA Facebook page. These events provide:

- Greater visibility for WFWA published authors
- Increased awareness of women's fiction among readers
- Opportunity for readers to interact directly with authors
- A benefit that will attract more published authors to our group

Any WFWA member with a women's fiction release during a particular quarter is welcome to participate. Each participating author will have a thirty-minute block to engage with attendees. At the end of each author's party time, a name will be randomly chosen to receive a signed copy of that new release.

### Upcoming Launch Party dates:

- May 5, 2015
- August 4, 2015
- November 3, 2015

[www.facebook.com/WFWritersAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/WFWritersAssociation)



# How to Work on Multiple Projects at Once (and Not Burn Out)

Erin Bartels

**T**he blessing and curse of being someone who writes fiction is that we often have more ideas (or deadlines) than we do time. We may find ourselves at all stages of the writing process all at once, but for different projects. And if we do other writing on top of that to make a living (like freelancing or full time work in marketing or journalism, perhaps) we may find ourselves drowning in a sea of writerly obligations with no solid ground in sight.

I am a copywriter and project manager at a book publisher. Right now I am in the midst of writing and routing back cover copy for Summer 2015 books, producing a catalog of Fall 2015 books, and positioning and titling Spring 2016 books. All told, I generally have approximately 130 books on my mind in some form or other at any given moment, even if it's just a nagging feeling that I really ought to get going on back cover copy for that one. There are a lot of balls in the air and I'm the only one juggling them, so it's pretty obvious who's to blame if one falls.

And that's just for my 9 to 5 job. Add in the books I'm reading for pleasure or research and the total continues to climb. Add in the books I'm writing, and...well, you get the picture.

Perhaps, like me, you find yourself working on more than one writing project at once. Maybe you're researching one book, drafting another, and revising a third, all the while manically jotting down preliminary ideas for yet another one!

How do you make time and mental space for each project so that you a.) get them all done and b.) do them all well?

First, let's look at deadlines. If you're under contract, your deadline has been set for you and that is the primary way you will prioritize your energies. If you're doing publicity for book one right now, you owe your editor revisions in March for book two, and the manuscript of the book three is due in June, of course you will need to find time and mental space to do all of it. Now is not the time to procrastinate by working on a proposal for a book you have yet to be contracted, now matter how over that first book you are.

The logical thing to do would be to schedule in the time for each task, starting with the most urgent. However, this is easier said than done. The marketing and publicity folks at your publisher will tell you that doing that radio show or that guest post on that blog is the most urgent. Your line editor will tell you that getting your revisions in is most urgent. Your acquisitions editor will tell you that turning in the manuscript is the most urgent. And your agent may be emailing you wondering what's coming next. On top of this, your car will need fixing, your family will need loving, and your dog will need surgery.

At some point, it will all be just too much and you'll want to crumple into a weepy pile on the floor. Can't everyone just leave you the hell alone?!

No. They can't. So you have to find a way to deal.

When my husband was finishing seminary, he was working forty hours a week and taking twenty credit hours of graduate level classes, including upper level classes in two dead languages with different alphabets. I rarely saw him. The only way he could get it all done without letting anything fall through the cracks (and still keep his sanity) was to become the King of the Checklists. For every class he made and printed out a checklist of every required reading, paper, test, and project along with their due dates. He glued them all to two enormous foam boards. As each task was completed, he checked it off the list, giving him visual confirmation that he was making progress and there was an end in sight.

What about you? What about your big projects? Find ways to break them down into smaller pieces. Assign deadlines for each. Make a checklist. So now, rather than having the giant goal of turning in your revisions in March, you develop smaller goals broken down into page counts or chapters. Instead of just one due date to turn in your manuscript in June, you can break it down into word count goals or chapter goals. Then watch as you systematically chip away at these insurmountable tasks and find them, in reality, quite doable after all.

But what if you're prepublished? What if the only deadlines you have are those you've set for yourself? In this situation it can be more difficult to know where to put your energies. Often we drift toward the new, shiny projects that are still in the honeymoon phase (in my experience, that's anything between 1 and 30,000 words) and avoid the hard work of refining a finished draft, or of finishing the draft of that novel we got stuck on around the 60,000 word mark. If we continue down this road, we may find ourselves with a hard drive full of rough drafts, but nothing even close to being ready to submit agents or editors.

Let's take a moment to assess ourselves. Maybe you're a born multitasker and you can easily and seamlessly move between projects and worlds. But maybe you're not. Not everyone does their best work when they're multitasking. Some people

just need to buckle down and block out everything else until their project is truly finished. If you're one of those people, I suggest taking good notes on ideas that come to mind for other projects and then forgetting them as you focus in on the one thing you really want to get done. It's okay to be singularly focused when you're still writing on your own terms and schedule.

If you do want to work on various projects at once, you'll want to find a way to put your best energies into each. I believe the best way to do this is to make sure you're at different stages of each project. For instance, don't try to draft two or three books at once. Don't try to research two or three books at once. Different parts of the brain are busy when you're researching, drafting, and revising, so this is the easiest way to multitask without burning out or getting completely confused.

You might also choose (and stick with) different times of day for each task, thereby training your brain to switch gears at the appointed times. For my part, I like to read at night and when I'm waiting for my son in the pick-up line at school, so that's when I do my research and take notes for *Enough of Peace*, a book I'm thinking about writing next. If I can get my butt out of bed in the morning, that's when I'm best at drafting—before everyone else gets up and before I have to start work—and so that's when I work on *I Hold the Wind*.

As for revising my finished manuscript, *The Bone Garden*, to make it shine for agents and editors, I'm making some notes, but I'm also putting it off a little until after I finish the draft of *I Hold the Wind*. When I'm done with the first draft of *I Hold the Wind* and need to let it sit for awhile before reading it again, that's when I'll pull out *The Bone Garden* once more and start putting the final gleam on it.

This is just the method that I've found works for me. You may discover that something else works for you. The point is to know your limits, focus your energies, and chip away at each project in such a way that you can track your progress. Find an accountability partner who will ask you about your progress now and then and who can help you

get back on track when needed.

Once you've reached your goal? It's time to reward yourself. Pick out your reward ahead of time to give you extra incentive to finish. As for me, I'm planning a shopping trip with a friend in February after I finish my draft of *I Hold the Wind*.

I'll spend perhaps another month or so revising *The Bone Garden*. Then I'll pick up that first draft of *I Hold the Wind* again to do my first read through and revision before sending it to a few beta readers. Most of the rest of the year, I plan to write only notes. Maybe I'll start the first draft of *Enough of Peace* in the fall if I get enough of my preliminary research and outlining done. And you never know—by then I may have yet another novel itching to get written.

After all, too many ideas is not a bad problem to have. •



**Erin Bartels** has worked in the publishing industry for thirteen years, most of those as a copywriter and catalog manager. A board member of the Capital City Writers Association, which just put on its second writers conference, she has been busy learning new facets of the word multitasking. She's sure by the time you read this, she'll be really close to writing *The End* on her current draft. You can find her at [www.erinbartels.com](http://www.erinbartels.com).

# When the Writing Gets Tough, the Tough Get Writing

Barbara Claypole White

I'm thinking about bad writing days, because after a string of them, I've rewritten the lyrics to Queen's "We are the Champions." As I type this, I can hear Freddie Mercury singing, "Bad writing days? I've had a few . . ."

A bad BCW writing day can be anything from total lack of inspiration to sinking in endless sentences devoid of meaning or voice. I'm fanatical about voice, so that last one is a killer. And yes, I have an ongoing problem with plot. But whether it's one bad day or (starts counting and runs out of fingers) many, the trick is to keep going, to let more writing be the cure.

Some of you know that I love to quote Sir Winston Churchill. It's not just because I'm English; it's because I write about courageous struggles with mental illness, and Sir Winston, bless him, battled his 'black dog,' dyslexia, and a speech impediment to beat the Nazis and win the Nobel Prize in Literature. What a guy. When he said, "If you're going through hell, keep going," he was talking from experience.

Despite negative reviewers who claim we churn out novels in our sleep, writing can take us into hell. It's bloody and frustrating and often makes us want to rip out our own fingernails. But here's the thing: writing's not meant to be easy. Take my recent copyedits for my third novel—

fourth, if you count the one under the bed—The Perfect Son. Over the course of seven fifteen-hour workdays, I felt as if I were sticking pins into my eyeballs. But after I addressed my copyeditor's nitpicks, the manuscript was light years better. A week going through hell, and I emerged on the beach. Well, not entirely, since I had to drag myself back to my now cold and very crappy WIP.

Monday at 6:00 a.m. the alarm went off, and I had a flash thought that lasted until I shuffled into the kitchen and poured coffee: I could sell my MacBook Air and buy professional gardening tools. I soldiered through that writing morning and the next. On Wednesday I woke up to my husband shaking me in sync with the alarm I'd slept through. But as I headed for the coffeemaker, a new character started talking to me, and suddenly my flat lined story had a heartbeat.

Writing time is precious. Family obligations and the real world intrude constantly, and on bad writing days any distraction appeals. How do I channel Sir Winston and, to quote his favorite phrase, "keep bugging on?" I try the following:

- Butt in the chair at the same time every day. 6:00 a.m. is my magical hour.
- Conduct an imaginary interview about the book. (Obviously, this follows the Oscar

nomination for the screenplay I wrote for my bestselling novel.) I explain out loud where the story idea came from, what the premise is, what the themes are, why it matters. I'm always surprised at what turns up.

- Vanish down the rabbit hole of research. I love to follow that blip of an idea, that tingly feeling that says, "I want to know more about X, Y, or Z."
- Watch the birds or do anything that empties my mind. I routinely figure out plot conundrums while scrubbing the master shower.
- Listen for characters, because they're all around us. My son, for example, is doing an internship at a local recording studio. Every night he has tales about his day and the haunted attic with the teddy bear that no one dares move. One evening he was talking about the chief sound engineer, a young woman. The next morning, after my husband shook me awake and I shuffled to the coffeemaker, a new character started talking to me—a spunky young sound engineer with scarlet hair who wants to take novel four into uncharted waters, and dammit, I'm following. Because that's what writers do. We follow our imaginary friends through good days and bad days, but we always keep writing. •



English born and educated, **Barbara Claypole White** lives in the North Carolina forest with her brilliant professor husband and, when he's home from college, their equally brilliant poet/musician son. An avid woodland gardener inspired by her son's courageous battles against an anxiety disorder (OCD), Barbara writes stories that find light through the trees and hope in the darkness of invisible disabilities. Her debut novel, *The Unfinished Garden*, won the 2013 Golden Quill Contest for Best First Book; *The In-Between Hour* was chosen by SIBA (Southern Indie Booksellers) as a Winter 2014 Okra Pick. Her third novel, *It's All About Harry*, has a publication date of May 2015. Connect with Barbara at [barbaraclaypolewhite.com](http://barbaraclaypolewhite.com).

# An Elephant Never Forgets

Tasha Seegmiller

**H**ave you ever re-researched something because you couldn't remember which website it came from? Do you have stacks of notes regarding character, scene, that great idea for a blog post, etc? Have you ever sent yourself a text or an email to remember that really important thing? Is your bookmarks bar or email inbox full of things you saved to read later, but now you have so many trying to sort through all of it seems daunting?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, I highly recommend you start a friendship with an elephant named Evernote.



**EVERNOTE**

### WHAT IT IS:

Think of Evernote as a digital bookshelf, where you keep your planner, shopping or to-do list,

ideas for books, inspiration for blog posts, and recipe books. It syncs across devices, with usability flowing seamlessly between Apple and Android mobile devices, as well as Mac and PC computers. Once something has been put in, it is there until you delete it. After all, an elephant never forgets.

### HOW IT WORKS:

After downloading the free software or app, you will create an account with your email and password of choice. It is totally safe (I've been working with it since 2011 without an issue), and will open a program. From there, you have several options.

1. Write a new note. This is great for jotting down quick information or writing a scene or character sketch. There are several options within note creation, from a strictly text file to bulleted lists to a checklist.
2. Start a new notebook. Think of this as a binder, one that you will label and put notes of that kind here. I have a notebook for my journal, reflections and inspiring thoughts, a notebook for recipes, one for the book I'm working on now, one for the book starting to form. You can have as many or as few as makes sense to you.

3. If you have several notebooks that are similar in nature, you can group them together in a stack. I have created a digital “Life Binder,” where I keep notebooks for my journal, goals, and religious insights.

Whatever you put in your Evernote will be available on all devices once they have reconnected to the Internet to sync.

But there is more. In the past, when a magazine featured an article that could be used for future reference, most people took out their scissors, cut the article and pasted/hole punched it into a notebook. Evernote has taken that same concept and made it digitally available with a feature called the web clipper. (Get it, clipping?)



It is totally free and appears in your Internet browser, again as an elephant icon. You can save the full article, a simplified article that will give you just the text, the full page with everything that was surrounding the article, or you can bookmark or screenshot (this is totally possible when in the app too—shoot me a message if you want help). The best part is right then, before you hit save, you get to pick what notebook it goes into. No organizing, searching, remembering later—it’s already where you need it to be.

This is a basic overview, but one that will get you started. It is essential to remember when you start playing with new technology that it’s like walking into a newly remodeled kitchen. It is pretty and fun, but remembering where everything goes and having it feel like a comfortable workspace takes time, but then it works better than the old one did. Evernote has considered this and has

some incredible tutorials available as step-by-step articles or walk-you-through videos.

And, as always, if there are any questions about how this technology can work for you, I’m more than happy to answer them: @tashaseegmiller in the WFWA site. •



**Tasha Seegmiller** is a mom to three kids and high school English teacher in Southern Utah. She writes contemporary women’s fiction with a dash of magic. Her loves include Diet Coke, owls, chocolate and cinnamon bears. She is a founder of and contributor to Thinking Through Our Fingers, and can be found at [tashaseegmiller.blogspot.com](http://tashaseegmiller.blogspot.com).

### **Write for *Write On!***

If you want to contribute an article or have a suggestion for an article, please send an email to [writeon@womensfictionwriters.org](mailto:writeon@womensfictionwriters.org)

# Being part of the WFWA Community

Orly Konig-Lopez

**W**hy do you join a professional organization? To learn about your craft, obviously. But also for the community.

Being part of the WFWA community doesn't mean you just come out of your cave in January and participate in the Write-A-Thin or post in workshop forums. There are many other ways of supporting the organization AND fellow writers.

### Women's Fiction Café Week

Twice a month, WFWA hosts one of our published members in a week-long Facebook event to discuss one of their novels, the inspiration behind the story, interesting themes/research, etc.

*What can you do?* Join the Café discussions. Pop in when you can and comment on a thread that interests you or ask a question. Invite your friends, family, and readers to join. Promote the Café weeks via your social media.

### Facebook Launch Parties

Each quarter WFWA hosts a launch party on our public Facebook page to celebrate new women's fiction releases.

*What can you do?* Join the Facebook launch parties. Pop in when you can and celebrate with your fellow women's fiction writers. Invite your friends,



family, and readers to join. Promote the Launch parties via your social media.

### Local and Specialized Hub Groups

There are currently 16 specialized or local groups on the Hub. These are great places to connect with local and like-minded writers.

*What can you do?* Join an existing group or start a new one if there isn't one for your region or sub-genre. Start discussions, organize get-togethers with others in your area, coordinate book signings or help spread the word about a reading or signing.

### Beta Reading and Query Feedback

Did you know there are forums where you can

post a query or seek out a beta reader?

*What can you do?* Helping a fellow writer with a query critique or a beta read a great way of supporting and encouraging a fellow writer. But in the process, you may improve your own writing. And make a new friend.

### **WFWA Facebook & Twitter**

Are you following WFWA on Twitter? Have you liked our public Facebook page?

*What can you do?* Share or retweet a post that spoke to you. Comment on a post and engage others who also comment.

Time is limited, for all of us. Supporting your organization doesn't have to mean volunteering for a specific role, it can be as simple as sharing posts via social media and helping raise visibility for women's fiction authors, or helping out a fellow writer.

We've all come to WFWA because we write and love women's fiction, and the success of WFWA rests with all of us. •

