

PEACE WITHIN, PEACE WITHOUT: Conflicts in the Writing Life

BY BRUCE HOLLAND ROGERS

Our lives as writers are sometimes bliss. Sometimes. But there are ways in which writers commonly find themselves in conflict—internal conflict and conflict with other writers. I want to look at how we can be more at peace with ourselves and with other writers.

1 Inner Peace and the Foam-White Bull

Here's a very old story: Minos wanted to rule the island of Crete just as badly as some people want to write. He prayed to the gods to send a sign confirming his divine right to be crowned king. Poseidon, the sea god, answered Minos' prayer. A white bull, white as sea foam, came from the waves. This was Poseidon's gift.

Minos knew the rules. When a god sends you a gift, it's not supposed to be yours to keep. Poseidon expected that King Minos would sacrifice the bull that had confirmed his special status.

But as soon as the crown was on his head, Minos started to think of being king as a solitary achievement,

something he had done for himself. He forgot that a king, like an artist, is an ordinary person acting out an extraordinary role.

Once a man becomes a king, he doesn't belong to himself any more. He belongs to his people. Once a man or woman becomes an artist, he or she belongs to the art. Putting on the new clothes of an important role is called *investiture*. But you can't put these new clothes on over the old ones. You have to divest yourself of who you used to be. You have to take the extraordinary role seriously, leaving your old clothes and old possessions behind.

Minos refused to give up his former identity as a man of worldly property. He cheated the god. In the place of the divinely beautiful foam-white bull, he sacrificed another white bull—a very fine one, to be sure, but not the bull that his kingship demanded.

And because Minos held back the sacrifice that his role demanded, his queen, Pasiphaë, developed an unhealthy interest in the bull. She lusted for it, and who can blame her? The bull radiated divine power. If Pasiphaë's desire was unnatural, it was only because the bull itself was

unnaturally appealing.

The upshot of Minos' greed was that his queen gave birth to a monster that was half-man and half-bull, the Minotaur. The beast was a blemish on the family reputation for the rest of Minos' reign. It was kept in the royal basement where it ate youths and maidens. That is, the monster devoured the future. Minos' dream of kingship ended in nightmare.

When I first started writing, I thought I was entering a glamorous career. I knew, because everyone was eager to tell me so, that there would be hard times along the way. Fine. I could handle some lean years on the way to fat ones. If I didn't appear on the *Tonight Show* until I was, say, thirty years old,

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THE PRESIDENT'S VOICE.....

This is it: the official PRESIDENT'S EXHORTATION TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE.

You've all been reading Conference Coordinator Terey daly Ramin's enticing monthly updates about the speakers and guests slated to attend Ninc's conference in Philadelphia September 6-9, so I'd be stating the obvious if I pointed out that Terey has put together a phenomenal line-up of workshops and programs. But other conferences have great line-ups, too. Why attend Ninc's?

I'll tell you why I attend them (and I've attended every single one except the Lake Tahoe conference, which I deeply regretted having to miss.) Simply put, there is no other conference like it.

I've heard complaints from members that Ninc conferences don't provide authors with adequate promotional opportunities. It's true that Ninc doesn't sponsor book signings (although perhaps future conferences will include such events). But Ninc conferences have helped me greatly in my own promotional efforts. At our conferences, authors tend to share their experiences much more freely than at other conferences. I've gleaned invaluable insights from Ninc members who've discussed what has and hasn't worked for them in their promotions. The manageable size of our conferences has also enabled me to discuss my ideas for promotion with editors and other publishing professionals in attendance.

I still remember the Ninc conference (Atlanta) at which I cornered Candy Lee, then Harlequin's vice-president of editorial, and spent an hour with her mapping out how I wanted a particular book of mine to be handled. She pulled a legal pad from her tote and took notes, and she saw to it that most of my requests were honored. I can't imagine this happening at a larger conference. At another conference (Savannah), Ninc member Jennifer Blake gave a superb presentation on how to use desktop computers and color printers to create a unified "look" for one's promotional material. This was at least as useful as a book signing to me.

I've heard the complaint that our conference doesn't offer a wide variety of workshops. Yet the small size that limits us in terms of how many workshops we can offer also benefits us by making our workshops more candid and inclusive. At Ninc conferences, experts don't stand at the front of the room and lecture to the masses—we usually sit in a circle and engage in give-and-take. Editors, publishers, agents, and authors all contribute. The quality of discourse is high because we're all professionals. The workshops are advanced seminars, not freshman-level symposia.

And then, of course, there is friendship. Okay, let's call it networking; that sounds more businesslike. But it feels like friendship to me, or perhaps sisterhood and brotherhood. At Ninc conferences, writers congregate to share experiences, triumphs, and sorrows. We talk. We laugh—even at the sorrows. We confide and advise. We reach out to one another. Larger conferences are diluted, but Ninc is concentrated, making this kind of intimacy possible. From heart-to-heart conversations to casual repartee over coffee, I have learned more, gained more, and grown more from attending Ninc conferences than I have from attending any other conference.

I know, I'm venturing into touchy-feely territory here. For some of you, the most touchy-feely aspect of the conference in Philadelphia will be a visit to one of the massage therapists Terey has lined up for Saturday afternoon. (Massage therapists! Be still, my heart!)

Ninc is not your average conference. That's the best reason to attend. Send in your registration. I'll see you in Philadelphia. — **Barbara Keiler**

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I could handle that.

I had completely unrealistic notions of what it would cost me to be a writer, and I knew little about the true benefits of the profession.

I was equally naive about being a husband, a role I also took on early in life and in partnership with a young woman who, I would say, knew just as little about what it took to be a wife. In my early writing and in my failed marriage, I was willing to make sacrifices if I could be pretty certain of what I'd get in return, but I wasn't good at making those sacrifices that were a surrender of who I had been before I became a writer and a husband. I didn't embrace the sacrifices that were called for by my new identities.

The myth of Minos and his foam-white bull is useful for reminding us that we've got to relinquish some of our former lives if we're going to be kings or spouses or writers. But all this business about *sacrifice* can be misleading. It makes the whole business sound like a matter of

economics: you pay your sacrifice on this side of the equation and get your new role, with its attendant benefits, on the other side.

Sacrifice and Benefit

In fact, it often turns out that the sacrifice *is* the benefit. "Marriage," writes Joseph Campbell, "is not a simple love affair, it's an ordeal, and the ordeal is the sacrifice of ego to a relationship in which two have become one."

Similarly, a proper king is no longer *himself*. Ancient kings lived in splendor as a sign of the people's prosperity, but being closely identified with the people and their fortunes meant that the remedy for plague or famine or other disasters was to sacrifice the king. Being king was an ordeal.

Art can also be an ordeal, one in which the personal ego is diminished for the sake of the art. Just as no king automatically gets a victorious or prosperous reign, no artist gets guaranteed results from sacrificing himself in the fires of becoming an artist. You take on the ordeal of being an artist, and your reward is...you get to be an artist. That's all. That's all that you can be sure of. The only other guarantee is that if you accept your

gifts halfheartedly, you'll suffer.

All right, so that's the mythic truth. But what does this mean in practical terms? What have the gods given you, and what do you owe in return?

I can't say. Even if I know you very well, I can't do more than guess about your gifts because you have to recognize them as gifts before they have any potency. Someone may say to you, "What a gift you have for saying the right thing," but if you don't think that it's true or you don't think of that trait as important, then "saying the right thing" is not a gift of the sort I mean.

Important gifts, the gifts from the gods, are the flip side of our callings. What do you feel called to do? What is your purpose in life? The answers to these questions can help you to see what gifts you have that will help you fulfill that purpose. Or if you're not sure of your calling, you can consider what important gifts you seem to have. What traits are your truest expressions of yourself? What are your talents? If you used them fully, what would you be doing?

I think that some of my own gifts include: the sensitivity to know musical writing from writing that plods along, a strong empathy

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INTRODUCING.....

The following authors have applied for membership in Ninc and are now presented by the Membership Committee to the members. If no legitimate objections are lodged with the Membership Committee within 30 days of this NINK issue, these authors shall be accepted as members of Ninc:

New Applicants

Tara Taylor Quinn, Scottsdale, AZ

Cheryl Holt, Seaside, OR

Charlotte Hubbard (*Melissa MacNeal*), Jefferson City, MO

Debra Salonen, Catheys Valley, CA

Linda Triegel (*Elisabeth Kidd*), Ottsville, PA

Irene Bennett Brown, Jefferson, OR

New Members

Gaelen Foley, Venetia, PA

Kelly McClymer, Orono, ME

Rosaline Fox (*Rox Denny Fox*), Tucson, AZ
Susan A. Kimoto (*Susan Floyd*), Los Banos, CA
Maggie Davis (*Katherine Deauxville, Maggie Daniels*),
Sarasota FL

Sharon Devita, Tucson, AZ

Lynn V. Miller (*Meg Lacey*), Cincinnati, OH

James L. Nelson, Harpswell, ME

Marcia King-Gamble, Tamarac, FL

**Ninc has room to grow...recommend
membership to your colleagues.**

**Prospective members
may apply online at www.ninc.com.**



BREAKING NEWS

BY PAMELA BROWNING

The Times vs. Tasini

Big media companies lost an information-age dispute on June 25 when the Supreme Court, in the case of *The New York Times* vs. Tasini, upheld an appeals court ruling 7-2 that freelance writers may control electronic rights to articles they sold for print in a regular newspaper or magazine. The suit was filed against five publishers and database companies by the National Writers Union in 1993.

The court ruled that compilation in an electronic database is different from other kinds of archival or library storage of material that once appeared in print. This decision means that copyright laws require companies such as the *Times* to get freelancers' permission before posting their work online. The original appeals court ruling found that a group of publishers including the *Times* infringed the copyrights of freelance writers when they included their articles in databases from Lexis-Nexis and Proquest without permission or compensation.

The court denied that this use was an allowable "revision" of the original publications in which the articles appeared. In the majority opinion, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said, "Speculation about future harms is no basis for this court to shrink authorial rights." And she's confident that publishers "may draw on numerous models for distributing copyrighted words and remunerating authors for their distribution." (Hold this important thought: remunerating.)

Jonathan Tasini, president of the National Writers Union and lead plaintiff in the case, said, "My fervent hope is that the decision spurs companies to sit down with us and negotiate."

"This decision is a great victory, not just for freelance writers, but for readers as well," said Letty Cottin Pogrebin, president of the Authors Guild and a co-plaintiff in the class-action suit. "The Supreme Court clearly articulated a fundamental position that we have held and protected for years: Others should not disseminate or profit from our creative product without first securing our permission and paying us our fair share. By securing this right for us, the Court has enhanced our ability to make a living at our trade, while we provide content for readers that can be accessed via new technologies, now and far into the future."

"Unfortunately, today's decision means that everyone loses," groused a *Times* spokesman. "The *Times* has lost this case and will now undertake the difficult and sad process of removing significant portions from its electronic historical archive. That is a loss for freelance writers because their articles will be removed from the historical record. Historians, scholars, and the public lose because of the holes in history created by the removal of these articles from electronic issues of newspapers such as the *Times*."

(Hey, not so fast, you NYT, you! The American Library Association assures us that the same materials are still archived—and available for free—on microfilm, paper, or other media at many libraries, public and otherwise.)

The *Times* immediately went to work to purge from their archives 115,000 articles written by freelancers from 1980 to 1995. (Since 1995, publishers have generally made sure that their contracts with freelancers retain electronic rights.) Just in case freelancers wanted "their work to remain available," the *Times* invited writers to call two published phone numbers.

If you dial the numbers, a recorded message cites the Supreme Court decision, saying that the *Times* is "obliged" to remove freelance articles from their archives. Writers are then cautioned that, if they want to keep their material in the *Times*' electronic archives, they must sign a contract—available on the web or via mail—granting the *Times* rights to their

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for others, a knack for inventing interesting lies, great tolerance for ambiguity and contradiction, and the urge to have everyone in the room pay attention to me. These gifts are tightly wound with my calling to write.

And what do I owe for these gifts? I'm not always sure. In real life, the bargain isn't as explicit as Poseidon's. The sacrifice of art is like the sacrifice of marriage. You give day by day, and what's required of you changes. It often comes down to noticing how you feel about small decisions. Last Sunday, did you write for two hours and take a walk with your spouse, or did you watch football most of the day? How did you feel about your choice?

What the myth tells us is that if we don't make the sacrifices, whatever they are, we will be in pain. Worse, the gods will laugh at our folly.

Let's say you take all of this very seriously and resolve that you will do better than Minos. You will accept the responsibilities that come with your gifts. You will answer your calling.

The Conflict Of Our Calling

The gods still have reason to laugh. They like to set impossible tasks for us mortals, issuing more than one call at once and watching us break ourselves upon the contradictions. Up on Olympus, this is high humor.

Most of us have to respond to two or more callings simultaneously. Often, those callings and the sacrifices they demand are in conflict. Being a devoted parent, for instance, may demand that you sacrifice writing time to be with your children. Being a devoted writer may demand that you sometimes close the door to your children in the afternoon, forbidding them to enter unless the house is on fire. Both sacrifices are

demanded by the gods. Either action, closing the door or turning off the computer, may create Minotaurs.

The situation sounds hopeless, and for good reason. It *is* hopeless. It's not easy being mortal. The laughter of the gods rings in our ears, and some days we are justifiably bitchy about it. You can't win. You just can't win.

But you can lose well. The story of Minos tells us about the consequences of one kind of failing, but there is a worse one which Minos avoided entirely. As I said in the beginning, Minos wanted to be king just as badly as some of us want to be writers, to be artists. And he did it. Minos paid dearly for hoarding part of his gift. But he didn't hoard all of it. *He was king.* He lived out the identity he had chosen. If Minos had been less than who he was, he would have been hollow by the time he was old.

The gods have stacked the deck in this game, and mortals can't win. But by taking up the vestments of writer, spouse, parent, or any heroic role, we can at least ensure that we don't completely lose. When the gods laugh at our struggles, at least their laughter will be light. At least they'll be laughing at men and women worthy of a foam-white bull.

2 Outer Peace: Dismantling The Barricades

You can't stroll very far in the City of Literature without coming to an intersection where writers stand at opposing barricades. From behind toppled desks and stacks of books, the two sides hurl erasers and slogans at one another:

"You people aren't professionals! Who the hell reads you, outside of graduate seminars where the students are forced to do it! Real writers are popular!"

"Real writers, huh? You people wouldn't know elegant prose if it bit you on the ass! Real writers create art!"

"Art, *schmart*. Real writers write to be read. We've got Stephen King and Edgar Rice Burroughs over

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articles for no further compensation and releasing the *Times* from any claims for compensation in the future.

This tactic did not sit well with the National Writers Union (UAW Local 1981), which swiftly sent out a notice urging, **DO NOT SIGN ANY CONTRACT THE TIMES IS OFFERING—EITHER IN PRINT OR ON THE WEB. YOU WILL BE GIVING UP YOUR RIGHTS AND POTENTIAL FINANCIAL COMPENSATION STEMMING FROM THE SUPREME COURT VICTORY.** The Authors' Guild sent out a similar but more sedate notice to its members, also cautioning them not to sign away any rights lightly.

The NWU asked writers to flood the *Times* with phone calls. They requested that everyone make two calls. Here's what they suggested:

Call Number One—The automated message; when you reach the message, do not select the option to visit the Web. Wait until the message ends and gives you options to receive the contract via mail and leave a recorded message making the following points: We want fair compensation for our work. We will not sign away our rights under duress. We believe in preserving the public record, and there is no reason to delete articles—the Supreme Court cited licensing systems as one option. The NWU has created the Publication Rights Clearinghouse, which will resolve the liabilities from the lawsuit by legally licensing rights to individual articles.

Call Number Two—The office of *Times* Publisher Arthur Sulzberger; object to the *Times'* rejection of offers the NWU has made to negotiate as well as the paper's attempt to take away rights from writers without fair compensation.

Phone numbers: Automated message: (212) 556-8008; (212) 556-8009; (888) 814-2698 (toll free); Arthur Sulzberger: (212) 556-3588.

As you may have guessed, this case isn't over yet. The potentially lengthy next stage will determine what, if any, damages are due in the class-action suit. *Time* magazine reports that Tasini will ask for "as much as \$600,000 in damages and copyright fees."

Then, The Sequel

Shortly after the *Times* began cyber-shredding, the National Writers Union filed a new lawsuit against the *Times*, saying that it is "the first in a series of actions unfolding in the coming weeks aimed at protecting the rights of freelance writers."

The suit, which was filed in a New York court, challenges the *Times'* effort to force freelance writers to sign away their rights to articles covered by the aforementioned Supreme Court ruling. The new suit alleged that the contract the *Times* is demanding that freelancers sign as a condition to keeping their articles in the *Times'* archives is illegal and unenforceable.

"We offered to negotiate with the *Times* after the Supreme Court decision. But the *Times'* answer to all freelancers, was 'drop dead,'" said Tasini. "The *Times'* publisher Arthur Sulzberger chose to intimidate, frighten, and assault the rights of freelancers and attempt to take away their right to compensation from the illegal use of their articles by the *Times* unless they sign away all their rights, past and future. He regretfully leaves us no choice but to file suit, unless he announces by close of business today that he will rescind the *Times'* policy."

"The *Times'* action creates the blacklist of the Internet Age. The Supreme Court has said the *Times* has violated federal law, and the *Times* is now demanding that people waive exactly the rights that the Supreme Court vindicated. If not, the *Times* will cut off the freelancers' livelihoods. No one who tries to enforce the Supreme Court's decision will be able to write for the *Times* ever again. That's a blacklist."

Tasini continued, "We would much prefer to negotiate reasonable solutions to the post-Supreme Court decision situation that publishers must grapple with. However, we also strongly caution publishers that we will be monitoring their posture toward freelancers and will not hesitate to take appropriate action."

With that, Tasini announced that a mass demonstration would be held in front of *Times* offices in Manhattan on July 19.

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BREAKING NEWS



writers. It has more than 7,000 members nationwide, including journalists, book authors, technical writers, and poets.

Copyright Infringement Suit

As if your mind isn't already boggled enough by the above, here's a related case for you to mull over: The Authors Guild and freelance writers Derrick Bell and Lynn Brenner filed a class-action copyright infringement suit against *The New York Times* in federal court in Manhattan on July 3. The suit seeks a global resolution to the dispute over authors' contributions to the *Times*' electronic database.

The plaintiffs seek class-action status to represent all freelance writers who have contributed works that originally appeared in a *Times* print publication and were subsequently reproduced in the *Times*' electronic database or other electronic databases without the writers' authorization.

"The Authors Guild has taken this action to protect the economic interests of our members and all freelance writers," said Guild president Letty Cottin Pogrebin. "Our action has been prompted by the *Times*' aggressive campaign of the past ten days," meaning, of course, the *Times*' invitation to freelancers to call the *Times* and release the company from liability if they wish their work to remain in the *Times*' archives.

"The Supreme Court didn't say the *Times* had to remove the articles, it said the *Times* had to pay for them," explained plaintiff Derrick Bell, a visiting law professor at New York University and a member of the Guild's governing board. "The court stressed that these rights issues could be resolved through licensing systems, such as that operated by the Authors Registry. The *Times* shakes its head about the tragic loss to the public of parts of its archive, yet won't even begin to negotiate payment for the works it wants to use in its databases."

"The *Times* continues to show a deliberate disregard for the possibility of acquiring proper licenses to these works," said Guild executive director Paul Aiken. "The *Times* has gone to great lengths to avoid sharing some of its database revenue with its contributors, compelling many freelancers to retroactively surrender their electronic rights to their prior work without additional payment if they want to contribute to the newspaper now or in the future."

Michael Boni of Kohn, Swift & Graf, attorneys for the plaintiffs, said, "The legal principle has been established—the *Times*' unauthorized electronic use of freelance articles is copyright infringement. With this action we seek to resolve this dispute on a global basis, both for past infringement and for future uses of the freelance works."

This Wind Don't Go There

More lawsuit stuff: Despite the lifting of an injunction against publication of *The Wind Done Gone*, Alice Randall's *Gone With the Wind* sequel, the copyright infringement case still huffs and puffs along. Publisher Houghton Mifflin and Randall could still be cited for significant damages.

And the *Toronto Sun* reports that Houghton Mifflin will not send any copies of *The Wind Done Gone* to Canadian distributor Thomas Allen & Son, "nor to any other country in the world," according to an Allen publicist.

Seems there weren't a whole lot of orders, and exporting would raise additional risks.

Gnutella: Sounds Like Disease of the Month

Salmonella. Rubella. Gnutella?

Sorry, there's no vaccine. In fact, it's spreading. The Gnutella system, fast on the heels of Napster, works without a

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►►► here, the best-selling writers in the English language!"

"And you're proud of that? We've got Gertrude Stein and James Joyce, two of the most idiosyncratic stylists who ever picked up a pen!"

"And you're proud of that? Snobs!"

"Plebeians!"

"Amateurs!"

"Hacks!"

"Pretenders!"

"Prostitutes!"

If you come back the next day, the barricades may be at a different intersection. The tones of the argument will sound similar, but some of the artsy writers of yesterday's battle will have crossed over to the popular side, some of the popular writers will have defected, too, and the fight will go like this:

"Writing is an adventure!"

"Is not! It's a *job*!"

"You'll never be authentic with that attitude!"

"Hope you enjoy starving with *your* attitude!"

"Hey, at least we'll live lives worth living!"

"At least *we*'ll make a living wage!"

"You're losing your souls!"

"You're just lazy!"

"Careerists!"

"Dreamers!"

All of this may look amusing from the outside, but let me assure you that at every pair of barricades, both sides throw their erasers with lethal intent. These arguments generate a lot of serious ill will. It isn't fun to be on either side of the street.

Choosing Sides

When we choose up sides like this, we do real damage to ourselves and to each other. As soon as we divide up, we cut ourselves off from the camaraderie, experience, and wisdom of the other group. We exaggerate our differences in order to justify the separation. We demonize. Everybody loses.

How do these barricades get erected in the first place? Why are these debates

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so hot? And what can we do about the problem?

It might seem that the stakes in these disputes are just a matter of taste. One side likes highbrow stuff, say, and the other side prefers lowbrow. However, people are generally pretty sensible about not arguing over taste. If I'm crazy about chocolate and your sweet obsession is licorice, neither of us is going to hotly defend our preference.

But the sorts of choices we make as writers are seldom so simple. In writing, we often have to choose, at least temporarily, between two things that we desire.

Rabbi Zusya of Hanipol said, "In the coming world they will not ask me: 'Why were you not Moses?' They will ask me: 'Why were you not Zusya?'" If I write work that any number of other writers could have done just as well, I know that at some point I'll be asking myself: Why were you not Bruce Holland Rogers? Authenticity is an aspect of the psychological or spiritual success I crave.

At the same time, I was raised to value self-sufficiency and security. Even though my wife now makes enough for us to live on, I want to pay my own bills. My social status and self-worth are tied up in my income. Income is another aspect of what I mean by "success."

Some projects offer big rewards in terms of authenticity and only the faintest hope of money. Some promise good money but offer only the faintest hope for self-expression. Very few promise good money and complete artistic freedom, and those projects generally aren't open to anyone but writers who already have artistic and professional reputations.

The Barricade of Authenticity

Not too long ago, I found myself behind the barricade of Authenticity, throwing erasers at one of my rich friends behind the Money barricade.

Let's call him Vincent. I was pointing out all the problems of working for one of his markets, a game company that produces fiction. In the past, I had tried writing for that company. They had jacked me around a lot. Working for them was, I concluded, bad for the soul.

Vincent fired back an eraser that hit me right between the eyes, raising a cloud of chalk dust and giving me a nauseating headache. "You let them jack you around?" he said. "If you don't have any business sense, then you shouldn't be a freelance writer!"

I was about to throw back the biggest eraser you have ever seen when a mutual friend pulled me aside. "You know," this friend said, "your career and Vincent's were very similar for a time. I remember when Vincent was wondering if novelizations and tie-in work would rob him of his artistic soul. He turned down such work for a while, but he had to pay his rent somehow. Then he was making good money, got out of debt, and he decided he liked being in the black. I know he'd like to do more original work, but he'd have to take a serious pay cut. Meanwhile, since you stopped doing tie-in books to focus on original work, your income has been, um, smaller. See where I'm going with this?"

I did.

I don't think any of us sees success as just one thing. Today I think success is writing what I want to write, writing well according to my own standards, getting critical acclaim, keeping to a daily schedule, piling up pages, getting paid, having a prestigious publisher, winning prizes, and making a living from my work. By the criteria on that list, I am entirely successful in some areas, largely successful in others, and a miserable failure at that last one.

That's where my wound is.

Vincent has a different definition of success that probably includes

many of the same things. He's making a ton of money, winning prizes for his original work, etc. But he has a wound, too. I don't know exactly what the wound is. I'd guess it has something to do with all the novels he might have written if he weren't writing someone else's books for money. Or maybe he craves the respect of his peers, and feels that some of them discount his original work because he does so much tie-in fiction.

Whatever his wound, I hit it square on with my eraser. Then he devastated me with the eraser he fired back. If he had said that I didn't know how to write a good sentence, I'd have known he was full of it. I am confident in my success as a stylist. But attacking my business sense, that hurt. I'm already tender there.

When someone is hitting our wounds, no wonder these battles are so serious!

Some writers can't be drawn into particular fights because they have no pertinent wounds. A given writer may not take sides in the fight between the Partisans of Entertainment and Forces of Education because he has never had to choose in this arena. He sees both sides as equally important or equally irrelevant. But that same writer might snarl like a wounded boar if you said that the real measure of quality was whether a work outlived its author. He's very successful writing mass-market originals. He knows they're ephemeral, but damn it, they are *good*! As for *your* stupid notions of quality and success...

Get ready to duck.

Insight at the Barricades

Equipped with a little insight about why we stand at the barricades, what can you do about it these disputes with your fellow writers? Three things.

First, you can be gentle with other writers by not making sweeping, self-justifying pronouncements about



BREAKING NEWS

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ **Cont. from page 6**

central computer system coordinating file sharing in exchanges of digital files. The *Wall Street Journal* recently reported that the Gnutella system is spreading faster than—well, the plague.

Though it was previously limited to a few thousand users at once, Gnutella now reaches tens of thousands of users all at the same time, thanks to a talented bunch of software developers. It's estimated that more than 40,000 computers are linked at any one time with more than two million files of music, movies, and other material—like books?

Lately, individual Gnutella users have been sued for copyright infringement. But the *Journal* says that Gnutella software developers aren't considered to be at legal risk because their programs can be used for many things, and because, unlike Napster, they don't maintain a database of copyrighted material.

So if you were in denial about this exchange-of-digital-files phenomenon, get over it! It's growing, it's BAD, and it's hungry.

So You're Not On It Either?

Book Magazine has released a list of the ten most influential people in publishing. The list was posted in alphabetical order, so who's Numero Uno? You decide.

Phyllis Grann, CEO and president of Penguin Putnam

John Grisham, author and publisher
Sessalee Hensley, fiction buyer,
Barnes & Noble

Carl Lennertz, director of publisher programs, Book Sense

David Remnick, editor, *The New Yorker* magazine

J.K. Rowling, author

Scott Rudin, movie producer

Andrea Smith, literary editor, *The Today Show*

Amanda "Binky" Urban, literary agent, ICM

Oprah Winfrey, talk-show host,

Cont. on p. 11 ▶ ▶ ▶

Peace Within, Without

▶ ▶ ▶ what success is. We're all bound to emphasize the sorts of success we already enjoy or feel we're on the way to enjoying. We're all bound to de-emphasize the success that, though we may crave it, seems more remote to us. Acknowledge that there are as many kinds of success as there are successful writers.

Second, when you're wounded in a debate that others have touched off, acknowledge your wound for what it is. You wouldn't care so much, wouldn't be picking up an eraser to hurl, if you weren't touchy about something the other side gets in more abundance than you do. To put it another way, you wouldn't rise to the bait if the bait didn't appeal to you. So understand that appeal. Try to define and acknowledge your desire.

Third, and this may be the most useful step, ask yourself what the other side might have to teach you. What do those other writers have that you want? Maybe you could learn from each other.

For example, the fight between "Writing is a job!" and "Writing is an adventure!" seems to draw a lot of writers. What they're really arguing about is writing as Product or as Process.

Product writers aim at a goal, such as making money or appearing in a particular publication. They write head-first, figuring out what kind of work they need to write to achieve their goal and then writing just that kind of work. They market top-down, studying an individual market to understand its needs and tailoring the work for that market. In a sense, Product writers market first, then write.

Process writers have no aim but the writing itself. They write heart-first, figuring out what they are writing only by seeing what they have written so far. They market bottom-up, studying the broad market to find an editor who might be interested in

the finished work. Process writers don't think about markets until the writing is done.

Writers who stand at these two barricades proclaim the other side's lack of seriousness. If you're always writing to meet someone else's needs, how can you possibly produce anything fresh, idiosyncratic, or original? And if you're writing only to please yourself, how can you possibly survive in the marketplace? Both sides make dire, puritanical predictions about the fate of those writers across the street. Product writers are sure to lose their souls to Mammon. Process writers are sure to starve.

In fact, both approaches, Product and Process, are useful, and it may be helpful to know how to shift between them, if only as a brief respite from what you ordinarily do. A Product writer who is burning out can often renew her passion by writing without any goals for a week. A Process writer who is discouraged by the market's rough reception can gain a toehold, and get her confidence back, by focusing on one commercial market long enough to sell to it.

The same is true for the barricades of Highbrow versus Lowbrow writing, Fixed Text versus Hypertext, Writing to Inspire versus Writing to Entertain. If you're feeling stuck, what you need may be behind the opposing barricade.

The longer we stand at the barricades, flinging erasers and recounting the myths of how doomed and deluded the other side is, the harder it becomes to cross the street and find out what those other successful writers know that we don't. And that's a shame. **NINK**

This essay was adapted from the book Word Work: Surviving and Thriving as a Writer, Invisible Cities Press, to be published in the spring of 2002. Copyright © 1999, 2001 by Bruce Holland Rogers.

Online.....by Lorraine Heath

The Novelists' Inc. conference is drawing near, and conference coordinator Terey daly Ramin reminds us about the conference web links. You can find them on the Novelists, Inc. website, <http://www.ninc.com>. We're also listing them here.

The Mutter Museum & College of Physicians, <http://www.artcom.com/Museums/newones/19103-30.htm>. Museum Director Gretchen Worden will give us a special presentation on historical forensics and the museum's collection—including a look at some of the writers who have been inspired by it.

Another link of interest is to keynote speaker and special presenter Susan Race's website for Personal Growth Systems, <http://www.personalgrowthsystems.com>.

For the Adam's Mark Hotel's website, go to <http://www.adamsmark.com/philadelphia/index.htm>.

And <http://philadelphia.about.com/citiestowns/midlanticus/philadelphia/mbody.htm> will link you to a great many Philadelphia area sites for tours or information. Just scroll down this page for the Philadelphia A-Z links.

Research

Having a difficult time coming up with names for your characters? Visit the Social Security Administration Name Distributions list, <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/NOTES/note139/note139.html>. Using a sampling of names from Social Security Number card applications, the Office of the Chief Actuary has published lists of given names in popularity order by gender, year of birth, and, in some cases, state. You'll find these lists: The top three names of each year for 1900-1997. The top 1000 names for births in 2000. The top five female and male names by state for 1999 and 2000. The top ten names for birth years 1880-1997. The 1000 most popular names for each decade of the 20th century. A very interesting site!

Joyce Marlow found "an interesting site that lists dictionaries, linguistics, and all sorts of links we all might be interested in." It's World Wide Web at <http://www.quinion.com/words/wordlinks.htm>. This one provides dialect and regional English, dictionaries, phonetics, columns, mailing lists, and other general information.

Providing Links

When providing URLs in your e-mail, don't forget to include the **http://** which is used to identify the type of protocol: hyper text transfer. Many e-mail providers allow

users to turn the hyperlink function on so that when they receive an e-mail that has a URL with **http://** included, it will automatically provide a hyperlink to that URL. If you don't include the **http://**, then the hyperlink probably will not be provided. To be safe, if you want to provide a hyperlink within your e-mail, always include **http://** with the URL.

Inspirational Writing

For anyone interested in writing Christian fiction or nonfiction, the *Christian Writer's Market Guide*, www.stuartmarket.com, lists hundreds of book and magazine publishers looking for Christian fiction and nonfiction as well as other markets such as greeting cards. Author Sally Stuart, who hosts the site, also provides a list of conferences and a bookstore that features her works as well as the works of others.

Promotion

The Book Promotion Strategies website, <http://www.BookPromotionStrategies.com>, managed by Greg Spence, will teach you how to "sell more of your books, in less time, for more profit." He taps into the many free or inexpensive ways to promote yourself online.

Another good resource for promoting online is *How To Publish and Promote Online* by M. J. Rose and Angela Adair-Hoy. The description and reviews for this book are a little misleading because they focus on the e-book and e-publishing aspects. However, the book actually contains a lot of information that applies to promoting traditional books as well. It lists sites that offer author chats, places to have your books reviewed offline and online, e-zines, discussion groups, and other resources valuable to authors. I found the book very informative.

The disadvantage is that, as we all know, the Internet is ever-changing. Sites come and go, and so not all sites listed are still available. Because of this, you do need to verify that the sources are still valid. I was also surprised that the lists weren't more inclusive. I know of many sites that aren't included in the book, but I found it useful because many sites that I wasn't aware of were listed. In paperback, it's \$13.95. Depending on how involved you want to get with promoting yourself on the Internet, you might find the book useful.

Tom and Diane Potwin, Web Master and Publisher, *The Literary Times*, <http://www.tlt.com>, offer a host of free promotional opportunities for writers. They also

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▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ provide what they call “Pocket Change Promotion.” You can gather information on all the possibilities at the easy-to-navigate website. Tom advises, “The printed version of *TLT* is currently on hiatus, but we expect to have it back on a set schedule by the end of the year. If you would like to receive information on print advertising, we can put you on a list to be notified of schedule dates.” You can e-mail them at littimes@tl.com or call the toll free number: (877) 765-7664.

Historical Romance Writers, <http://www.historicalromancewriters.com>, is a new site designed to promote—you guessed it: Historical Romance. The site offers reviews, links, bulletin boards, and ways to promote your books for a fee.

Newspapers.com, <http://www.newspapers.com>, is a terrific research site because it provides links to newspapers and publications across the world. After researching the site further, it occurred to me that it could also be a good promotional tool if you need to send press releases to publications outside of your home town—perhaps when you’re on a book-signing tour. E-mail addresses are provided for the thousands of publications, which are arranged by state.

Spammers

Recently on Ninclink, members discussed the amount of unsolicited e-mail they’ve been receiving since yahoogroups took over egroups. I was recently updating some information at yahoogroups.com and discovered under my “account information” that there is a place to indicate that you do not want to receive special offers. I changed the feature to indicate that I did not want to receive special offers and have received less junk mail since. If you have registered with yahoogroups.com in order to access listserves, you might want to double check your account information if you are receiving a lot of unsolicited e-mail.

Helping To Prevent Domestic Violence

Trying to decide what to do with a cell phone you’re no longer using? Go to Donate A Phone, <http://www.wirelessfoundation.org/12give/>. Collected phones are donated to programs that prevent domestic violence. The site provides the location of drop-off points in your city. And if your city has none, you can mail your phone to CALL TO PROTECT, c/o Motorola, 1580 E. Ellsworth Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48108.

Microsoft Outlook Tip of the Month

I have only recently said goodbye to AOL after subscribing to its service shortly after it came into existence. My current e-mail provider allows me to use Outlook Express, and I love all its features. For those who have Outlook, I thought I would share my latest discovery: automatic sorting of

incoming mail.

Within “Local Folders,” I created a folder called “Ninc.” From the menu bar, I then selected:

1. “Tools”
2. “Message Rules”
3. “Mail”
4. “Mail Rules”
5. “New”

In box 1, I clicked “Where the subject line contains specific words” which put the statement in box 3. I clicked the blue underlined portion in box 3 and in the first box brought up, I typed Ninclink. Then I clicked “ADD” and clicked “OK.”

In box 2, I clicked “Move to the specified folder,” which put the statement in box 3. I clicked the blue underlined “specified folder,” clicked the “Ninc” folder, clicked “OK.” I then clicked “Apply now.”

Now whenever my mail comes in, Outlook automatically puts mail from Ninclink into the “Ninc” folder. When I’m ready to read news from Ninclink, it’s waiting for me in one place and I can read all the Ninclink mail at one time.

You can set up as many rules as you want and have them all active at the same time. I’ve set up a folder and a rule for every listserve to which I subscribe. It can be overwhelming to see 200 messages in your “in” box, but with Outlook and its rules feature, I am able to sort most of my expected mail as it comes in, which leaves my “in” box much less intimidating.

Novelists, Inc. Listserve

At www.yahoogroups.com/group/NINCLINK, you can learn more about Ninclink, subscribe, or set your preferences (digest, individual posts, etc.).

If you discover sites that you think would be of interest to Novelists, Inc. members, please e-mail me at my new e-mail address, Lorraine-Heath@home.com.

Controlling Your Listserve Preferences through E-Mail

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Unsubscribe	NINCLINK-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
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Moderators:	
If You Have Questions, E-Mail:	
Brenda Hiatt-Barber	BrendaHB@aol.com
Patricia de la Fuente	Patricia@hiline.net
Lorraine Heath	LorraineHe@home.com NEW

MEMBER NEWS.....Compiled by Kathy Chwedyk

Robin Lee Hatcher Receives RWA Lifetime Achievement Award

Robin Lee Hatcher, author of 38 novels, champion of authors' rights, and a former RWA president, has been awarded the 2001 Lifetime Achievement Award by the Romance Writers of America (RWA). The Lifetime Achievement Award is one of RWA's most prestigious honors. Hatcher received a golden RITA statuette during the RWA award ceremony at the national conference last month in New Orleans.

RWA members vote on the Lifetime Achievement Award recipients based on the length of the nominees' careers in romance fiction—they must have been publishing romances for at least 15 years—and their contributions to the promotion of the genre.

In 1997, Hatcher filed a class-action lawsuit against a former publisher on behalf of more than 270 authors. A settlement resulted in the release of \$950,000 in withheld royalties to the class authors as earned, not as an award, and a change in accounting practices by the publisher.

Hatcher's July 2001 release is *Ribbon of Years* from Tyndale House.

Chassie West Nominated for Anthony Award

Chassie West's novel, *Killing Kin*, has been nominated for an Anthony Award as Best Original Paperback. The award will be presented at the Anthony Awards Banquet on November 3 at Bouchercon 2001 in Crystal City, VA.

Earlier this year, *Killing Kin* was nominated for the Edgar

Allen Poe Award, which is given by the Mystery Writers of America. *Killing Kin* was published in July, 2000, by Avon. West's current novel is *Killer Riches*, which was published in April by the same publisher.

Bouchercon is the oldest and largest annual convention of mystery readers. The Anthony Awards are named in honor of William Anthony Parker White, one of the foremost mystery critics and reviewers of the 20th Century.

Bellacera To Participate In Romance Book Tour

Carole Bellacera has been invited by Levy Distribution to participate in a romance book tour from August 9 to 18 as a Forge Books author. Bellacera is the author of *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*, August 2001; and *Spotlight*, Paperback Edition, August 2001, a Holt Medallion Finalist.

Ninc Members among Reader-Writer Poll Finalists

Novelists, Inc. members who are among finalists of the 2000 *Affaire de Coeur* Reader-Writer Poll include Best Contemporary, Long: *Carolina Moon* by Nora Roberts; *Glass Houses* by Stella Cameron. Best Contemporary Novel, Category: *Lost and Found Groom* by Patricia McLinn (Pat McLaughlin); *A Matter of Trust* by Deb Stover.

Best Contemporary with Hero and Heroine of Color: *More Than Gold* by Shirley Hailstock; *No Crystal Stair* by Eva Rutland; *Swept Away* by Gwynne Forster (Gwendolyn Johnson-Acsadi).

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magazine founder, book-club maven (Um, I don't know about you, but I'm not really surprised that somebody called "Binky" is one of the most influential people in publishing.)

Amazon Prices Up, B&N Keeps Discounts

Amazon.com has abolished many of the deep discounts that made ordering from the online retailer so attractive for consumers. They're now selling most titles at full price. NYT bestsellers remain at 40 percent off; backlist titles and most of non-bestselling frontlist titles are being sold at full retail cost. If you order two or more books at the same time, shipping is free.

An Amazon spokesperson said, "We've offered this to try and improve the customer experience.... If our customers don't like it, they'll let us know."

The B&N.com website retains the same discount structure as early B&N superstores—40 percent off bestsellers, 20 percent off hardcovers, 10 percent off paperbacks, with free shipping when buying any two or more items.

BookSense.com allows discounts to be set by individual Web retailers. Discounts at these independent online stores range between 10 percent and 20 percent.

Make Way For Yertle the Turtle

In Massachusetts, six elementary school students lobbied the State House to name Robert McCloskey's *Make Way For Ducklings* the state's official children's book. The book is about a family of ducks living in the Boston Public Garden.

But State Rep. Paul E. Caron of Springfield couldn't let hometown icon Dr. Seuss down. He has proposed naming Seuss—aka Theodor Geisel—the state's official children's book author and illustrator, and he wants to create a Dr. Seuss license plate.

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Laura Resnick is

THE COMELY CURMUDGEON

“For Better or Worse”

Have you read Stephen King's *On Writing*? I know some people got something valuable out of it, but the book primarily revealed to me why I've never liked King's work: I'm not interested in the things he finds interesting, and I share very few of his views on craft. (Apart from King, the only other time I've ever encountered such fierce hatred of adverbs was in a tip sheet from a work-for-hire soft-core porn publisher. Me, I have nothing against adverbs and I won't pretend otherwise.)

I threw *On Writing* across the room right around the time King explains that if you'd rather watch TV than read while you're working out on the treadmill, then you're not a real writer. Previously (adverb!), I had always respected King professionally (adverb!) even though I'm not a fan; but he lost my respect with his insistence, at various points in his book, about how people must behave in order to be real writers.

You know what? I watch TV! Moreover, I *never* read when I'm on the treadmill! So I guess my numerous novels, short stories, articles, and awards are all just a big fluke and I'm not a REAL writer after all.

Gosh, scrape the remains of my shattered soul off the floor of the girl's locker room, and then haul me away in a demonically possessed car.

Anyway, one thing I noticed before the book hit the wall is that King, like a number of writers, has an extremely supportive spouse. Although not unusual, it caught my attention precisely because, right around the time I was reading King's grateful praise of his wife, I received a letter from a Ninc member suggesting I write about how unsupportive spouses belittle writers' careers and sabotage their writing. Pondering the dichotomy, I gradually became interested in how writers respond to their spouses' attitudes, how spouses respond to their writers, and how much of a role gender plays in this waltz. (Yes, the subject could fill a thick tome; but I'm just a columnist and I have a merciful word-limit.)

What Kind of Problem Is This, Anyway?

First of all, based on my observations (not to mention the hands I've held of unhappy friends over the years), unsupportive spouses are in no way unique to writers; nor would a writer's unsupportive spouse miraculously metamorphose into a flawless mate if the writer's profession were something more conventional. Really. I know lots of people with conventional careers who have spouses every bit as unsupportive as the one whom the abovementioned Ninc

member described to me in her letter. So an unsupportive spouse isn't a writer problem, it's a marital problem; in fact, overall, it's simply a *human* problem, since it's an extremely rare individual whose spousal, familial, social, and professional relationships are all always completely supportive and nurturing.

Now keep in mind that support, or lack thereof, means different things to different people. For example, one Ninc member says, "My husband has never even *tried* to read my books, which baffles me. If he wrote a boring old textbook about, say, quantum physics, I'd do my best to slog through the thing."

During the dozen years I've been a professional writer, my own experience is that it's extremely common to meet a female novelist whose husband doesn't read her books, yet extremely rare to meet a male novelist whose wife doesn't ever read his. Personally, given how much of myself I invest in the novels which tens of thousands of people then find good enough to read, I confess that I would have problems accepting a husband who never read my books.

Some Read, Some Don't

However, many happily married women disagree with me on this point. "[My husband] doesn't read my work," says Jo Beverley, "but I don't see why he should. I don't drool over his beautiful electronic circuit designs." Beverley describes her husband as "very supportive." He takes responsibility for all her technical and computer problems, makes sure she has a great writing environment, and tries not to disturb her if he's around when she's working.

Dixie Browning's husband has never read a single one of her ninety books, "yet he couldn't be more supportive," Browning enthuses, explaining that he brags about her, goes out of his way to visit bookstores, and drives days out of his way to help her with research. Sylvie Kurtz's husband doesn't read her work, but she describes him as a "real hero" who consistently encouraged her ambitions as an aspiring writer and who wholeheartedly supports her career as a professional novelist.

Jean Brashear's husband has never read a word she's written, "but for a very good reason. He knows his penchant for tinkering and always wanted me to know that when I made it (not if—he always said 'when'), that I had done it all on my own. He also wanted to be sure...I would always know that he loved me with or without my writing."

Although the portion of male contributors to this article is too small (15 percent) for me to draw any valid gender-based conclusions, it is nonetheless worth noting that whereas 30 percent of the women who responded said that their spouses don't read their work at all, the only case where a man related a similar situation was with regard to a wife who was unsupportive of his writing career ("I felt I had to fight for every minute I spent at the keyboard and had to justify every penny I spent on stamps"), in a marriage that didn't last.

However, the largest group of respondents were women writers who not only described their husbands as extremely supportive, but also confirmed that their husbands read their work. Some of them also described spousal involvement in the writing process.

Georgia Bockoven's husband reads her manuscripts, and she particularly asks him to give a careful reading to "male" aspects of a novel to make sure they work. Maggie Price relies on her husband, a retired police lieutenant, to discuss her romantic suspense novels as she works on them. Another Ninc member says of her husband, "We've sat in restaurants and hashed out plot points, sometimes to the alarm of the wait staff."

Sandra Madden says that her husband, a retired actor, "has a very logical mind—as opposed to mine—and helps with plotting." Ruth Glick's husband proofreads all of her manuscripts for her. Julie Kistler's spouse, though not generally a fiction reader, proofreads all her galleys. Loretta Chase's husband isn't a fiction reader either, "yet this valiant man," Chase says, "has read every single one of my manuscripts and provided intelligent critiques." Fantasy writer Jane Lindskold's husband not only reads all of her manuscripts and offers valuable feedback, he also drew a map for her upcoming fantasy novel when one was needed.

Most Valued Spousal Contribution

However, while some spouses read the work and some don't, some help with research or proofreading and some don't, some critique and some don't, most writers seem to regard the spouse's emotional and financial support of the writer's career—as opposed to the writer's craft—as the most valued spousal contribution. Perhaps this is because a spouse has little or no control over whether or not he or she likes fiction, whether or not they're shrewd critiquers, or whether or not they can ever understand the writer's craft. But supporting a marital partner's aspirations and endeavors is (according to the wedding ceremonies I've attended in a variety of religions and subcultures) a crucial part of being a spouse, and this specific kind of support seems to be what writers most commonly treasure in their spouses (or most lament about their spouses if they're not getting it).

Gene Wolfe, a prominent sf/f writer has "the most supportive possible wife" who reads and rereads everything he writes. Wolfe describes his spouse's emotional support early in his career when she willingly struggled to manage their five-person household on the typically sporadic income of a

writer. Ninc member Adrian Lee's husband insisted she stay home and write, as was her dearest wish, despite the fact that her writing didn't pay well. "Every time I considered getting an outside job, Larry wouldn't hear of it. 'You're going to write,' he'd say."

Loretta Chase says, "If it weren't for my husband, I'm not sure I'd have had the nerve to become an author... [My husband] had a lot more confidence in my abilities than I did." When Maggie Price would come home from her day job and then disappear into her computer room to pursue her writing ambitions, her husband started missing her. Rather than ask her to quit writing, he bought a notebook computer so she could join him in the living room while she wrote. Another Ninc member reports that although she has been going through a long dry spell in recent years, "[My husband] still has faith in me and urges me to keep writing."

Margaret Evans Porter's husband expressed no surprise at all when she sold her first novel: "I had no doubt whatsoever that you'd publish a novel someday," he told her. Ruth Glick says of her husband, "Norman has never questioned my career choice. And he's always been proud of my achievements." Julie Kistler says, "[My husband] was willing to foot the bills when I started this career (before I got any income rolling), and he has been doing it again from time to time as my career has hampered my cash flow... Amazing what a lack of income will do to your self-esteem. But my husband has been a marvel of tact and charm!"

"I Have Nothing To Thank Him For"

However, not every writer experiences this kind of spousal support. One contributor says that after watching so many people thanking their spouses for unwavering support when they're accepting writing awards, she's tempted to announce: "My husband has never helped me one iota in achieving my writing dreams, and I have nothing to thank him for in regards to my books." Another writer confides that "for the first ten years I wrote, [my husband] tried every way in the world to stop it." A Ninc member who prefers to remain anonymous says that her husband responds so disappointingly to good news about her career that she doesn't even share it with him anymore. On the heels of congratulating her for a recent career success, for example, he urged her, in his next breath, to go get a full-time day job.

Not surprisingly, a lack of emotional support—even a sense of deliberate sabotage of one's writing and dismissal of one's career—can be indicative of a troubled relationship. Sf/f writer Michael Bracken says that his first wife never supported his writing, "although our marriage ended for reasons that had nothing to do with the writing." However, as another sf/f writer reveals, "even if the spouse is fully supportive, family pressures and outside pressures can still disrupt the support and ultimately the relationship." Though this author's wife supported his writing career, their marriage ended in divorce. Indeed, at least two women sf/f writers cite their husbands' unwavering support of their writing careers as one of the few things which *didn't* go ► ► ►



BREAKING NEWS

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Caron made his case wearing a red-and-white striped hat. "I'm not a Grinch, here, there, in a chair or on the stair," he said.

"Dr. Seuss is a good author, and I like his books," said lobbyist Patrick Gallahue, age 9. "But *Make Way for Ducklings* is better."

Seuss supporters hope to raise \$2 million to build a Seuss memorial featuring bronze statues of Yertle the Turtle, Horton the Elephant, and the Cat in the Hat. But maybe they'd better think again. Statues of the *Make Way for Ducklings* characters, Jack, Quack, and Mack have been stolen in the past.

By the Grinch, perhaps.

Pamela Browning (www.pamelabrowning.com) has written books as well as fiction and non-fiction short articles for all age groups. She is editor of NINK. Send items for Breaking News to her at write2pam@aol.com.

In Memorium

Mystery Author Nora DeLoach died on June 19, just 21 days after being diagnosed with acute leukemia.

The 60-year-old author's twelfth book—and eighth in her mother-daughter sleuth team series, *Mama Cracks a Mask of Innocence*—was published the week of her death. The body was cremated and a private memorial service was held.

Ms. DeLoach was born in Orlando, Florida, and resided in Decatur, Georgia, with her husband William at the time of her death. She had three children and two grandchildren.

The author began her writing career in 1991. Her novels *Silas*, *Mama Solves A Murder*, *Mama Traps A Killer*, *Mama Saves A Victim* and *Mama Is Accused*, were published by Holloway House Publishing Company. *Mama Stalks The Past*, *Mama Rocks The Empty Cradle* and *Mama Pursues Murderous Shadows* were released by Bantam.



THE COMELY CURMUDGEON

▶ ▶ ▶ wrong in their former marriages.

Meanwhile, Cheryl Anne Porter says that an editor once told her that conflict over the writing often heats up in a marriage after the professional career is in gear, perhaps around the third book sale. This is when the craft and the business really start monopolizing the writer's time and energy and also when the spouse starts to realize that, despite all the sacrifices, the writer's income isn't nearly big enough to allow the spouse to quit work and live on the novelist's proceeds.

His Wife, The Romance Writer

In a different vein, I was riveted by the personal story of a writer whose husband spent years trying to sabotage her writing career: "[Eventually], he confessed that he thought if I were successful, I'd leave him. He also confessed that he knew I would be successful." After this admission, he later became actively involved in her work for the first time, agreeing to read books or scenes for which she wanted male feedback. "When he realized I wasn't leaving, I suddenly became his wife, the romance writer."

This reminds me of some advice I recently heard sf/f writer Steve Leigh, married for over 25 years and the father of two children, give when asked about combining family life with a writing career: "Find ways to involve your family in your work," to help them feel some personal stake in what you're doing rather than feeling excluded and mystified when you disappear into your private imaginary world (and your physical writing space) for hours at a time. Then they will even, Leigh asserts, understand that you *are* working when you're sitting there staring off into space; whereas the excluded and the uninitiated will remain convinced that you're doing nothing.

Another writer said that she read an article which stated that men measure value by how much money a thing generates. "I don't make much money, therefore my writing has minimum value in [my husband's] eyes. He doesn't think this way in order to hurt me or denigrate me, but it *is* how he thinks." Though the writer believes her husband will only be truly supportive of her career if she starts earning large advances, openly talking about these issues with him "has made things better."

Ultimately, despite the unusual aspects of writers' work and the unconventional patterns of a writer's career, the problems and blessings which arise in our personal relationships are not in any way unique to writers, and they manifest themselves much the same way they do in everyone else's lives. For better or worse, we're facing the same relationship issues—as well as the same potential solutions and possible disasters—as every doctor, lawyer, or street sweeper out there.

And spousal trouble with the writing *isn't* about the writing, it's about the relationship (says the single chick).

The Comely Curmudgeon would like to thank every single writer who trusted her with such personal and often moving stories about their private lives. She didn't have space to use every example she got, but she sincerely appreciates them all.

Liberty, Futurity



Equity, in Philly

September 6-9, 2001
(the weekend after
Labor Day)

Adam's Mark Hotel
Philadelphia, PA
City Ave. & Monument Rd.

Countdown to Philly.... Conference is Your Opportunity

Short, short column from me this month, folks! June and July were just packed, as you'll see when you look at the real conference stuff hidden in loud letters elsewhere in this issue of *NINK*. In fact, the letters are so loud they had to be put on their own separate pull-out pages in the center of the newsletter.

Within those pages you'll find the conference's preview program (those of you not coming to Philly are missing one helluva lineup!) and a registration form that you can simply fill out and snail mail or fax in if you've lost your other forms or forgotten how to get a form off the Internet where we've so conveniently put them. Also on the website, constant conference updates, including not only updates on the who's who among the editors, agents, and other publishing professionals signing on to attend, but any changes that get made to the program as they happen!

Yep, we've got separate pages for each day of the conference, conveniently available at your fingertips. All you have to do is type in www.ninc.com, click on Conference News, and click on whatever suits your fancy from there. Included on the conference pages are links to various special speaker websites, and to Philadelphia attractions from A-Zed, including maps.

And again, if you're coming to the

conference but need a roommate, contact Pat McLaughlin (e-mail: PMcLinn@aol.com; phone: (703) 237-2543) or Emilie Richards McGee (e-mail: ERMCGee@aol.com; phone: (703) 276-0022) with information like whether or not you're a smoker or a non-smoker, and they'll do their best to set you up.

For you rabble rousers out there who'd like to see more from and/or do more with the Advocacy Committee, we've got a special 90-minute Advocacy forum set up. The forum will be closed to non-Ninc members. Also, for those of you coming in early to go to New York on Thursday, September 6, remember to join the Ninc Board of Directors for dinner at The Olde Original Bookbinders on Wednesday evening, September 5.

So come one, come all! We've got something for everybody, and if you see question marks still glaring at you in spots, you'll know that I'm not done yet and there will still be a few surprises in store for you when you get to Philly, the town that just lost approximately 76 tons of human weight after being named the fattest town in America two years ago. (What can I say? I listen to the strangest news...<g>)

— **Terey daly Ramin,**
2001 Conference
Coordinator

In Philly...

Meet these industry
honchos...and your
colleagues and friends....

*Editors, agents, and
publishing professionals
already planning to
attend are:* Cecilia Oh, New
American Library; Damaris
Rowland, the Damaris Rowland
Agency; Claudia Cross, Sterling
Lord Literistic, Inc.; Steven
Zacharius, Kensington/Zebra;
Sarah Gallick; Christine Zika,
Berkley; Malle Vallik, Harlequin
Web; Jennifer McCord, North-
west Bookfest; stand-up comic
Brian Kiley from the Conan
O'Brien show; Susan Race,
coach, Personal Growth Systems
& author of the book *Succeeding in
the Workplace*; Jenny Bent,
Harvey Klinger, Inc.; Steve
Axelrod, The Axelrod Agency;
Ann LaFarge, Kensington/
Zebra; Audrey LaFehr, execu-
tive editor, Dutton/Signet;
Hilary Ross with Dutton/Signet;
Laura Cifelli, Warner iPublish;
Claire Zion, iPublish (Saturday
only); Kay Murray, Authors
Guild; Justine Jacobs and Joy
Irvin, massage therapists.

...plus more

Jake Elwell, Wieser & Wieser;
Charles Schlessiger, Brandt &
Hochman; Margaret Marbury,
editor, Red Dress Ink

...and more to come.

MEMBER NEWS.....

▶ ▶ ▶ Cont. from p. 11

Best Overall Historical: *I Do, I Do, I Do* by Maggie Osborne; *In the Presence of Angels* by Katherine Kingsley.

Best Foreign Historical: *Maire* by Linda Windsor. Best American Historical: *The Hostage* by Susan Wiggs; *The Mistress* by Susan Wiggs. Best Regency: *The Irish Bride* by Lynn Bailey (Cynthia Bailey-Pratt). Best Futuristic: *Loyalty in Death* by J.D. Robb (Nora Roberts).

Best Time Travel: *Destiny* by Maggie Shayne (Margaret Benson); *A Moment in Time* by Deb Stover.

Supernatural: *The Cat's Fancy* by Julie Kenner; *Splendid You* by Lynn Bailey (Cynthia Bailey-Pratt). Best Inspirational: *Awakening Mercy* by Angela Benson; *Not Exactly Eden* by Linda Windsor.

Outstanding Achiever: Shirley Hailstock, Nora Roberts, Susan Wiggs.

Best Up-and-Coming Author: Lynn Bailey (Cynthia Bailey-Pratt).

Top Ten Favorite Authors: Gwynne Forster (Gwendolyn Johnson-Acsadi), Susan Elizabeth Phillips, Nora Roberts, Deb Stover, Shirley Hailstock, Linda Howard, and Linda Windsor.

Affaire de Coeur is a print magazine for readers in the romance genre. Each year *Affaire de Coeur* conducts a poll where the readers select their favorites.

Authors listed above are the nominees for those novels with a pub date between January, 2000, and December, 2000. The complete list of nominees is available at www.affairedecoeur.com.

Send news for this column to Kathy Chwedyk at KChwed@aol.com or 1215 Fairmont Court, Algonquin, IL 60102.

Fast Track.....Compiled by Marilyn Pappano

The Fast Track is a monthly report on Novelists, Inc. members on the USA Today top 150 bestseller list. Members should send Marilyn Pappano a postcard alerting her to upcoming books, especially those in multi-author anthologies, which are often listed by last names only. Marilyn's phone number is (918) 227-1608, fax (918) 227-1601, or online: pappano@ionet.net. Internet surfers can find the list at: <http://www.usatoday.com>

Members who write under pseudonyms should notify Marilyn at any of the above addresses to assure their listing in *Fast Track*.

USA Today Bestseller List—June 2001

Sandra Brown, *Standoff*, Warner Vision
Stella Cameron, *Glass Houses*, Zebra
Janet Evanovich, *Hot Six*, St. Martin's
Janet Evanovich, *Seven Up*, St. Martin's
Janet Evanovich, *One for the Money*, Harper
Janet Evanovich, *Two for the Dough*, Pocket
Patricia Gaffney, *Circle of Three*, HarperTorch
Leigh Greenwood, *The Cowboys: Matt*, Leisure
Iris Johansen, *The Search*, Bantam
Iris Johansen, *Final Target*, Bantam

Jayne Ann Krentz, *Dawn in Eclipse Bay*, Jove
Elizabeth Lowell, *Moving Target*, William Morrow
Elizabeth Lowell, *Midnight in Ruby Bayou*, Avon
Connie Mason, *The Outlaws: Sam*, Leisure
Linda Lael Miller, *Only Forever*, Mira
Hailey North, *Dear Love Doctor*, Avon
Patricia Rice, *All a Woman Wants*, Signet
Emilie Richards, *Fox River*, Mira
Nora Roberts, *Dance Upon the Air*, Jove
Nora Roberts, *Carolina Moon*, Jove
Nora Roberts, *Reflections & Dreams*, Silhouette
Sherryl Woods, *About that Man*, Mira

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