

Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink

Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink

Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink

Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink Novelists' Ink



August 2005
Vol. 16, No. 8

The official newsletter of Novelists, Inc. — a professional organization for writers of popular fiction

"What I Learned In School"

BY LAURA RESNICK

Due to a series of events now past and circumstances now eliminated, I became very unhappy in my writing career several years ago. At that sobering juncture, I suddenly noticed (because *nothing* slips by me!) that I had structured my entire ability to earn a living around a notoriously unstable profession, i.e. writing novels. Meanwhile, I had also neglected to marry well (or at all), to acquire a wealthy relative who could be counted on to die and leave me a fortune, or to develop a professional fallback position that didn't involve saying, "And would you like fries with that?"

For various reasons, which can best be summed up as "I've never had any marketable job skills," I became a full-time, self-supporting novelist when I was 26. (Publishing, after all, seems to be an industry chock full of people who probably couldn't get or hold positions in any other profession.) Prior to that, I'd worked a disjointed series of odd

jobs (including one which required me to sign the British Secrets Act) in a variety of odd places. So I really had no profession or former employment experience to fall back on if I couldn't sell the next novel.

One day I decided I should probably remedy this situation before getting any older. Since finding a spouse just so I could avoid possible penury seemed fraught with potential complications, and since I'd rather ascend Mount Everest than acquire yet another relative (even a wealthy one in suitably frail health), I decided the best course of action would be for me to develop other professional options besides writing novels.

This is how I wound up pursuing a master's degree in journalism. Since journalism involves writing, it didn't seem like an outlandish choice of second-profession for me. It felt like a less eccentric decision than, say, suddenly pursuing a degree in cellular botany after having assiduously avoided science since 1978, or studying accounting despite being a sworn enemy of the IRS who gets headachy whenever I hear

phrases like "interest rate" or "debt ratio."

I was returning to school for practical reasons, not because I wanted to read a lot of books and attend lectures; I'm a writer, I *already* read a lot of books and attend lectures. I was looking for an academic program that would (sort of) prepare students for a (sort of) paying profession. Finally, since I couldn't make head-or-tail of the Graduate Record Exam, a test on which you have to score well to get into a good graduate program, it seemed wisest to target programs that would mostly be interested in whether or not I could write (since that was the only part of the exam that I aced).

Additionally, (I reasoned), once I had a master's degree in *something*, if my writing career ever fell apart, I'd be qualified to look for teaching jobs at universities or community colleges—something that merely selling 20 books does *not* qualify me to do, in most instances.

So in autumn 2003, I returned to university after nearly 20 years and became a full-time student again.

And it was a **Continued on page 3** ▶

INSIDE: *President's Voice: Weasel-Word It...2, Recapture the Magic: New Orleans Conference 2006...7, Conference Registration Form...8, Different Voices, Different Names...9, Introducing...11, Crayon on my Keyboard: In Memoriam...12, Bits'n'Pieces...13, 16, The Girls in the Basement: Days of Our Lives...14, 2006 Election Notice...16*

Novelists, Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1989

Advisory Council

Rebecca Brandewyne*	Evan Maxwell
Janice Young Brooks*	Victoria Thompson
Jasmine Cresswell*	Steven Womack
Maggie Osborne*	Barbara Keiler
Marianne Shock*	Pat Rice
Linda Barlow	Anne Holmberg
Georgia Bockoven	Jean Brashear

* Founder

If you have questions regarding Novelists, Inc., please contact a member of the Board of Directors.

2005 Board of Directors

PRESIDENT: Vicki Lewis Thompson
1536 W. Cool Dr.
Tucson AZ 85704-2141
(520) 297-9308
VLTPENPWR@aol.com

PRESIDENT-ELECT: Brenda Hiatt Barber
9241 Castle Knoll Blvd.
Indianapolis IN 46250-3484
(317) 849-3356
brendahb@aol.com

SECRETARY: Linda Madl
1734 King's Road
Manhattan KS 66503
(785) 770-9363
linda@lindamadl.com

TREASURER: Deborah Gordon
1240 Noonan Drive
Sacramento, CA 95822-2507
916-448-1964
DBHGGORDON@aol.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Annette Carney
PO Box 33204
Reno NV 89533
(775) 746-1680
annettecarney@sbcglobal.net

ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:
Barbara Keiler
32 Atkinson Lane
Sudbury MA 01776-1939
Phone: (978) 443-0770
Fax: (978) 443-0775
b.keiler@juno.com

CENTRAL COORDINATOR: David L. Brooks
Novelists, Inc.
P.O. Box 1166
Mission KS 66222-0166
Fax: (913) 432-3132
ninc@kc.rr.com

Website: <http://www.ninc.com>

Address changes may be made on the website.
For members without Internet access,
send changes to the Central Coordinator.

Copyright ©2005 by Novelists, Inc. All rights reserved.
No part of this newsletter may be used or reproduced in
any manner without written permission.

President's Voice

Weasel-Word It

In my reporter days we had a phrase for those instances when we didn't have all the facts for a story and didn't have time to get them. We'd weasel-word it. I picked up another phrase from those days; that story sucks dead donkeys. We used that when the weasel-wording didn't work out. But I digress. I'm here to talk about weasel-wording. Which I openly admit to doing.

Oh, come on, you do, too. Don't tell me you don't sometimes run out of time for looking things up, or you're sick of looking things up, or in order to really know what you're talking about you have to interview your cousin's husband's uncle who happens to be an anal-retentive jerk who would spend two days of your precious, deadline-infested time explaining ad nauseam something that you'll have to reduce to two lines in the story.

Yeah, I know there's *Google* now, and everything anyone could ever imagine is somewhere on *Google*. But there are time when even *Google* just doesn't cut it. Or —be honest— you don't dare go online to look something up on *Google* because then you'll liable to notice that you have 27 new email messages, and who can write with that knowledge perched in your fevered brain? So you weasel-word it.

Recently we had a lengthy discussion on Ninlink about accuracy in fiction. I dunno. Is that an oxymoron? At any rate, it came to light (that's weasel-wording for several people who shall remain nameless pointed this out) that a recent Big Bestseller was riddled with inaccuracies. Don'tcha know, it sold anyhow. Me, I gobbled it up, inaccuracies and all.

I'm thinking all those inaccuracies could have been avoided with some judicious weasel-wording. Instead of naming certain streets the characters raced through, the author could have simply said they raced through the darkened streets, turning right, turning left, whatever it took. Or something to that effect.

I would never presume to tell someone who has made a gazillion bucks on one book, and a few gazillion more on backlist books as a result of the impact of aforementioned book, how to address his/her craft. But weasel-wording is a useful skill that might have avoided some of these problems. I'm just sayin'. Of course, it might have dried up the other market for books rushing to point out the mistakes in the aforementioned megaseller.

And, after all, we are talking about fiction. In the newspaper business you're supposed to dish out facts. That's pretty much why I quit that job. Brutal reality is not my thing. I like a world I can manipulate to suit me, and then I don't have to depend on the weasel-word factor nearly as much.

On Ninlink it was also suggested that certain standards wouldn't have been expected of this aforementioned publishing juggernaut if the author hadn't claimed in the front of the book that pretty much everything in it was true. I'm taking a lesson from that, sports fans.

Here's how the front page of my next book is gonna read: I made this up! I made it all up! I changed anything that needed changing, so if you're trying to reconcile anything in this book with reality, forget it! That should do 'er.

In case you couldn't tell, this entire column is a commercial for Ninlink. If you're not hooked up, you're missing stuff. Ninlink is another place to get

research info you need so you don't have to weasel-word so much, and Ninlinkers know how to be succinct. Mostly. How to subscribe yourself is explained below this column. Give it a shot. Who knows? You might learn something you need for your own potential megaseller. You might even pick up a tidbit that keeps it from sucking dead donkeys.

*Your weasel-wording prez,
Vicki*

Stay in Touch with Ninc online.

Visit the website at www.ninc.com. Join the neverending e-conversation—for members only—by joining Ninlink. If you have questions, email moderator Brenda Hiatt Barber at BrendaHB@aol.com

Controlling Your Listserve Preferences through Email:

Subscribe	NINCLINK-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
Unsubscribe	NINCLINK-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
Switch to Digest	NINCLINK-digest@yahoogroups.com
Switch to Individual Mail	NINCLINK-normal@yahoogroups.com
No-Mail	NINCLINK-nomail@yahoogroups.com

What I Learned in Grad School

Continued from p. 1 ▶ very educational year. One of the first and most startling things I learned is that the world is generally much more generous to graduate students than it is to writers. If I had known this before, I'd have gone back to school a decade earlier!

For one thing, there are loads of opportunities to get someone *else* to pay for your graduate education! Who knew?

In my case, my tuition was completely comped by the university; this is not unusual, and it's obviously very different from the long-term, full-body exsanguination that most of us associate with tuition for undergraduates. Additionally, a related foundation paid me a stipend to work for a professor as a

"Research Assistant." I worked 15 hours per week for a salary roughly equivalent to selling French fries 40 hours per week. So just being *in* graduate school was looking darned good to me as an alternative to working in food service if my writing career fell apart. I also received a student loan at a lower interest rate (one available only to students) than even my tender-hearted grandma would have expected in return for lending me money.

By contrast, as a writer, of course, I have to repeatedly plead and nag for money which is actually *owed* to me. Speaking of which...

Even under the best of circumstances as a novelist, you get accustomed to waiting a month or two for checks, and you never really know

when they're going to turn up. And I, who had *not* been living in the best of circumstances prior to returning to school, had become accustomed to nagging exhaustively for checks that took five to seven months to arrive.

Always correct

But now, suddenly, without warning or preparation, I was living a life wherein, once a month, on the same date every month, without my nagging or begging anyone... *I received a salary check*. Moreover, my payment was always in the correct amount and always made out to the correct person.

As you can imagine, this was a huge emotional adjustment for me.

Even more astounding, ▶

“What I Learned”

based on what various professors and salaried journalists told me, in their professions, they *expected* this kind of treatment. As a *right*. All of the time!

Who knew?

Apart from the surprising and gratifying surprises about how plentiful and reliable money was as a graduate student, compared to my experiences as a working writer, there were numerous ways in which writing for a living had prepared me well for my year as a “mature” student (a standard phrase which referred to my age rather than my character).

Challenge Ahead

Due to the way graduate school is depicted in movies, books, and the legends people tell about themselves, I had always imagined it as the ultimate mental/physical endurance test. I had written 18 books by then; I had crossed Africa overland, from northern Morocco to the Cape of Good Hope; and I had sat through *all of I, Claudius* on DVD; but I was nonetheless daunted by the challenge that lay ahead of me when I arrived at graduate school. What if I didn't have the concentration, intelligence, resourcefulness, and stamina to succeed as a master's student?

This, it turned out, was a groundless fear.

For one thing, a remarkable amount of graduate-level work even in a respected program is just hoop-jumping. Meaningless busywork—at least when compared with the real, useful-results work of, say, writing the next chapter of your novel. One typical example would be that I frequently had to prepare brief written and verbal comments on material that I'd read for class. This exercise was designed, as far as I could tell, to prove that I'd read the material, and to save the professor the trouble of

being the one to talk to the class about it. Hoop-jumping requires some effort and can be quite time-consuming; but it in no way equals the challenge of writing the next chapter of a book.

And speaking of meaningless busywork... I soon discovered that a well-trained cocker spaniel could have filled my paid position as a “Research Assistant” in academia. I fetched newspapers from the corner bookstore for the professor. I checked the links on a vast website she supervised, and reported to her any links which weren't working. (I reported the exact same ones every quarter since my reports were never used and the links were never repaired.) I looked up addresses. I peeled price stickers off of folders and pasted conference stickers onto envelopes. I occasionally did something as worthwhile and exciting as a little proofreading or copy editing (*aaaggggh!*), and I once used my background as a former Ninc conference chair to budget and plan the menus for a small academic conference.

Since I was falling behind in my under-contract fiction writing that year (go figure), my new agent was a trifle vexed with the program when I one day admitted to her how I was spending my 15 hours per week as a Research Assistant (a position which was irrevocably tied to my scholarship, so there was no question of my quitting it). However, the work was far preferable to selling French fries. It was easy, they paid me well, and a little boredom wouldn't kill me. Well, not *quickly*, anyhow.

Of course, the academic program wasn't all pointless busywork. Every course involved delivering at least one big project of some kind, sometimes two or three such projects. Over the course of the year, I wrote several academic research papers; I

edited a one-shot online magazine (which investigated alleged supernatural phenomena in the region) that my team conceived, developed, wrote, designed, and published; I sat through numerous City Council meetings and wrote articles about local issues; and, to do my part in a group project attempting statistical measurements of changing messages in condom ads during the AIDs era, I spent several weeks browsing through gay male skin magazines from the 1980s in search of relevant material. (The soft-spoken librarian from whom I had to request this locked-away material each time I went to the research stacks seemed ready to do an intervention after the first week.)

The workload in graduate school was often tiring, and the major writing projects always loomed large on the horizon. However, anyone who has written a novel (let alone several epic fantasy novels that each weigh more than a medium-sized dog) cannot be daunted or defeated by the demands of a research paper. No matter how tedious (and, boy, they are *tedious*), academic projects at the master's level are mere *hors d'oeuvres* compared to the sustained effort required to write a novel—though novels, thank goodness, don't involve footnotes and pie charts.

Shaping Projects

The key thing I discovered in my first quarter is that quite a lot of graduate coursework involves things a novelist is already accustomed to doing. No, I don't mean spending weeks staring at enlarged images of penises in skin mags from the Reagan era. I mean, for example: coming up with ideas and then figuring out how to shape them into projects leading to a polished, printed end-result; wading through tons of research; reading a lot of stuff

fast to extract the relevant material; organizing a bunch of disparate sources into useful information and folding it into a coherent structure; thriftily using one area of newly-gained expertise by spreading it among multiple projects; juggling tasks, managing workloads, and keeping track of deadlines. This is the meat and marrow of surviving in grad school; and none of it is new to a professional novelist.

And speaking of keeping track of deadlines... Fifteen years of running full-throttle after my fiction deadlines ensured I was in good shape for a year of grad school deadline-sprinting. Sitting at my desk in the cramped, stuffy, windowless graduate-assistants office half the night so I could deliver a paper before the morning deadline was nothing new to me (indeed, I'm doing it right now for this *NINK* article—though my home office, thank goodness, has windows, fresh air, and good lighting).

There are, however, two key differences in the deadline process at grad school. First, you are never all alone in your fox hole. There was always a classmate or two sitting next to me, working on the same assignment. This came in handy when I needed a proofreader at 2:00 a.m. or wanted safety-in-numbers to go out into the dark night in search of more coffee at 3:00 a.m.

The second key difference is that after you deliver material in graduate school... no one ever pays you for it.

I don't mean that it *seems* as if no one ever pays you for it, or that you wait six months for payment, or that you're asked to rewrite it twice before you finally get paid. I mean, you don't *EVER* get a check for material you turn in to a professor on deadline. This was a particularly difficult adjustment for me. I explained several times to one professor who assigned a lot of papers that, based on the usual rate of compensation for my work, his bill was

mounting, and he owed me well over a thousand dollars by the end of the quarter. To my perplexity, he always just chuckled at me.

Boredom is another factor I hadn't anticipated in my graduate education. The tedium of dull classes and stultifying material was more difficult for me to adjust to than were the long hours, late nights, or multiple deadlines. (Boredom was a difficult adjustment for everyone, in fact. In one particularly dull course, my glassy-eyed classmates were openly hostile that, due to my need to start my shifts punctually at the local radio station, I had the professor's permission to leave class ten minutes early every session.) However, years of sitting through over-long awards banquets ensured that I was well-prepared for feigning an expression of polite interest during lectures on satellite technology for media, discussions on Plato and Kant, explanations of media-framing theory, and formulas for quantifying a valid sample size for a social survey.

Sightlines

Yet even writing for a living hadn't refined me into the cunning survivor that I eventually became in grad school, where I learned to choose a chair where the sightlines ensured the professor was unlikely to notice me napping, and where I learned to do my work for another class while pretending to pay attention to the one I was actually sitting in.

A more welcome feature of grad school, though highly unexpected, was the discovery that in academia, unlike the publishing world, cause produces effect. I found this so remarkable that I never stopped marveling at it. In our business, you can write the best proposal (or even full MS) of which you're capable, and yet despite all the effort you've invested, it's entirely possible that no one will buy it. Or you may deliver exactly the book your proposal and

your contract obliged you to deliver... and the publisher will suddenly decide it's unacceptable and refuse to pay you for it. Or your publisher may love the delivered book and even package it beautifully... yet reviewers will eviscerate it or sales will sink so low that no one in New York answers your calls anymore.

In other words, it's a common, accepted, and daily reality of our profession that we can work very hard and deliver good material... and yet the success of any given project is still a crap shoot affected by many variables, some of them mysterious or seemingly inexplicable.

Only upon becoming a grad student did I discover that this is not necessarily the way of the whole world. One of the most remarkable things about academia, from my perspective as a career novelist, is that hard work almost inevitably and invariably produces the desired effect or sought-after outcome. If you've delivered the assigned paper on time, the professor doesn't have the option to refuse to grade it (e.g. "pay" you for it); and if you do good work, he has little choice but to give you a good grade, let you pass the course, award you a degree, whatever. The only "X" factor or mysterious variable in the equation seems to be the unfortunate (and relatively unusual) instance where you get a vindictive, whacko, or wildly incompetent professor.

That did happen to one of my classmates, who unjustly got a low grade (from a strange, inept professor) for the excellent work he did in that class. Since I had been involved in the project in question (and got a good grade), I wrote a written support of my classmate's formal protest to the relevant committee.

Pause to consider this remarkable trait of academia: If you think you haven't been fairly rewarded for your efforts, there is an established process for you to protest ▶

“What I Learned”

- ▶ such treatment.
Whoa.

When your editor rejects your proposal because she doesn't like books set in California, is there a formal process for you to go over her head to protest this and get a fair hearing? When your agent loses all interest in your new MSS after a couple of rejections, do you get to lodge a complaint against him and have the matter reconsidered? When an editor refuses to accept a delivered MS, does the writer have the right to convene a hearing on the matter?

Not in a pig's eye.

But a reliable system of fair rewards for work rendered is such a part of some worlds (such as academia) that there are established procedures to address instances where the system breaks down. I was AMAZED!

Another thing that flabbergasted me in grad school was the number of times that professors—*journalism* professors—assured us that the work we turned in to them didn't need to be interesting or well-written (in the sense of stylish, riveting prose—good grammar, punctuation, and spelling *were* expected, of course). I found this jaw-dropping. Where I come from, I explained to my professors, you're not even allowed into the peanut gallery if your work isn't interesting and well-written. Maybe so, but in academia, they assured me, being interesting and good were not important qualities in a writer. (My God, man—it's a *wilderness*.)

I initially doubted this seemingly absurd premise... until after I'd read a bunch of academic writers. The proof was in the pudding. It's quite, quite true. You *don't* need to be a good or an interesting writer in order to succeed at academic writing. (And in submissions of my own papers to academic conferences, the review notes frequently seemed to express

suspicion about the quality of the writing: What dark flaws in my research was I trying to conceal with lively, polished prose?)

Finally, perhaps the two most important traits that my career as a writer enabled me to bring to my endeavors as a “mature” student were resourcefulness and persistence. Until starting graduate school, I had long believed that publishing was the worst-run industry in North America and that the IRS was our nation's most impenetrable bureaucracy. However, a year of dealing with the irrational, self-contradictory, arcane, and Byzantine maze of university bureaucracy has altered my standards on this score beyond my wildest dreams.

Mythological resourcefulness

My years as a working novelist developed in me the persistence and resourcefulness of a mythological Greek heroine. I say this without undue immodesty, since I am, in this respect, very ordinary and average among working novelists. And were it not for these qualities, I genuinely would not have gotten through my first day as a graduate student, never mind the whole year. Far and away the most tiring and time-consuming element of higher education is just trying to figure out how to register for your classes, confirm you're taking the right number of credits, get the correct name assigned to your student loan so you can access it, find the health insurance office, find the various people responsible for signing your various forms and documents all year long, get a key to your office that actually works, find someone who can restore electrical power to your office, convince the library that you do not owe them \$400 for books which have been checked out since before you were

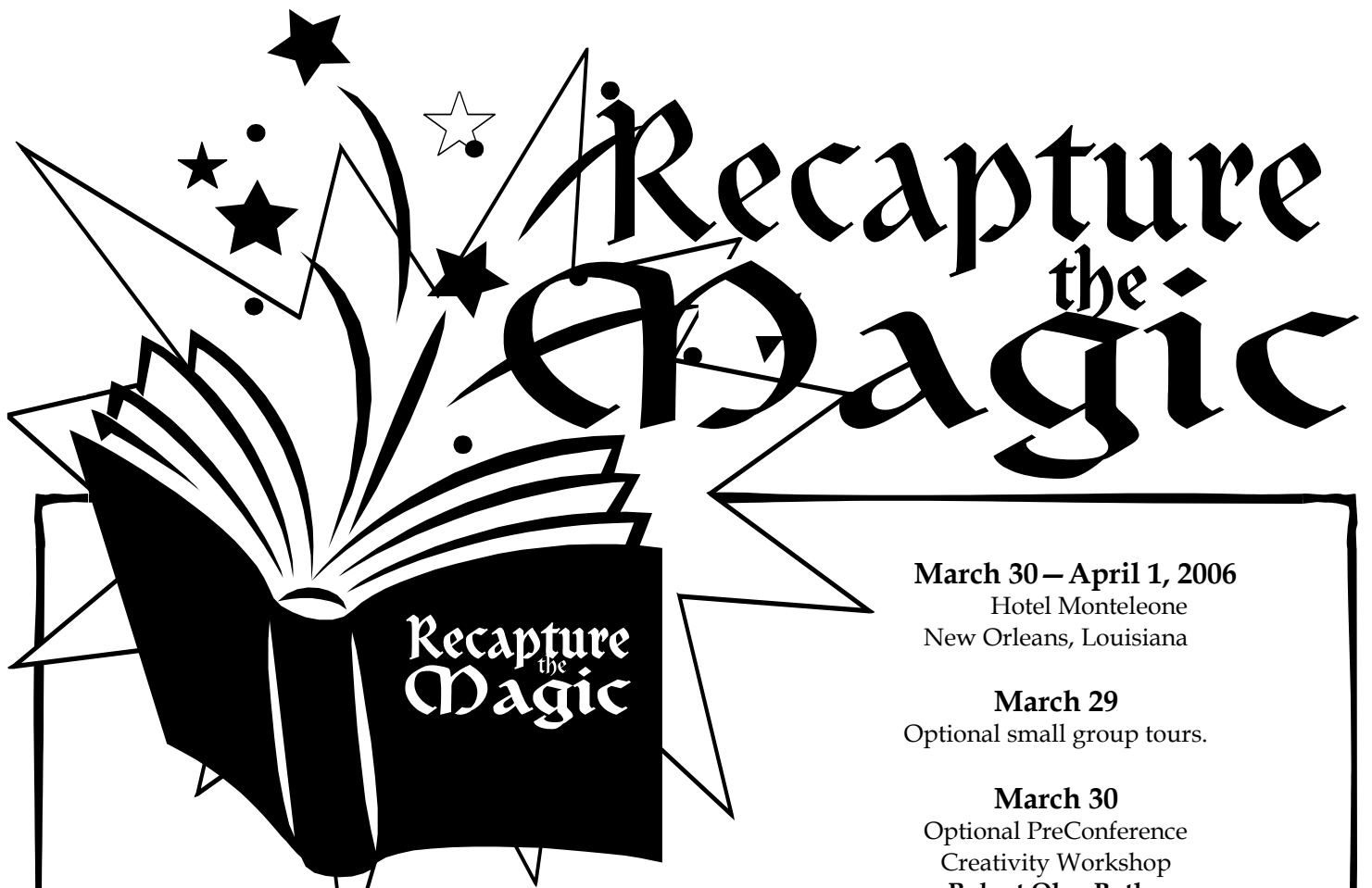
old enough to read, get access to your student account so you can pay your fees, and so on and so forth. *This* sort of thing, it turns out, is the true challenge of getting a master's degree. Getting through this maze is ultimately what separates the MAs from the people who disappeared during the first quarter and were never seen again...

As for me, I'm not an MSJ (Master of Science in Journalism) yet. I still have to finish my thesis. I'm not daunted by the size or the work involved, and I *want* that degree I worked so hard for, so I will get around to finishing it soon. However, I fell far behind in my writing schedule while I was a student, I have a fair bit of catching up to do, and the thesis is (have you been paying attention?) the only thing on my plate for which I will not be *paid*. So it's back-burnered at the moment.

And the next big challenge that looms before me is my journalism internship. My program awarded me a scholarship to go overseas for this. I leave this winter, and my presumed assignment, as of this writing, is with the Associated Press in Jerusalem for three months. As near as I can tell, the reason I was picked for this particular honor is that I was fastest off the mark when my professors shouted “Duck!” during the interview.

So I owe this opportunity to the ingrained reflexes of the career novelist.

Laura Resnick's next release is Disappearing Nightly (Luna, 12/05), to be followed sometime next year by Arena (Tor Books). In her copious spare time, she's trying to learn some Hebrew, which is written backwards in strange letters and therefore reads much like her first drafts.



**Keynote
Speaker:**

*Nora
Roberts*

March 30 – April 1, 2006
Hotel Monteleone
New Orleans, Louisiana

March 29
Optional small group tours.

March 30
Optional PreConference
Creativity Workshop
Robert Olen Butler
Writing from the White Hot Center
Creating stories that resonate in our bones.
8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. – \$65 includes Soup &
Salad luncheon at the Monteleone's Le Cafe

Early Bird Registration – August 15–September 15, 2005 – \$295

Conference registration fee includes full breakfast buffets Friday and Saturday morning at the Monteleone's Le Cafe, Dinner and Dessert buffets on Thursday, Welcome Reception Friday evening, and the Keynote Luncheon on Saturday afternoon.

You may use the form on the reverse side or register online at www.ninc.com.

Why take advantage of Early Bird registration?

- 1) Save yourself \$45 in registration fees.
- 2) Save the sanity of the conference committee volunteers.
- 3) Save yourself a great room at terrific rates: \$179 for singles & double/doubles and \$375 for junior suites (+ tax, of course. Currently, 13% plus an occupancy tax of \$2 per room night.) * ** *** ****

* Once our room block is filled, the hotel is not obligated to offer the reduced rate, as those who registered later on for the NYC conference discovered to their dismay. Moral of the story, register early if you want to lock in this great rate.

** Monteleone rack rates for the end of March are \$250-\$335 for rooms and \$600 for junior suites.

*** The rates are blocked for March 29–April 1. However, the Hotel Monteleone will extend this rate three days before and three days after depending on availability (i.e. reserve early) for those who need more time to fully research the Big Easy.

This rate is not available through travel agents. It is only available through the hotel for those who have registered for the Ninc conference.

**** Eve Gaddy, bless her soul, has offered to match up roommates again this year.

— **Pat Hamon, New Orleans Conference Coordinator**



**Novelists, Inc.
16th Annual Conference
New Orleans 2006**

March 30 ~ April 1
Hotel Monteleone
214 Rue Royale
New Orleans, Louisiana

**We encourage you to register online via the conference page at www.ninc.com
or use this form if you don't have Internet access:**

Member Name: _____ **Name on Badge:** _____

Name Badge Pseudonyms (2 max): _____ **Editors/Agents/Speakers:** _____

_____ **Title:** _____

_____ **Company:** _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Arrival Date: _____ **Departure Date:** _____

Names of Roommate(s): _____

Special Physical Requirements: _____

Member Registration (Please circle):

Early Bird / Aug. 15 – Sept. 25, 2005.....	\$295	Agents, Editors, etc. Registration.....	\$125
Regular / Sept. 26 – Feb. 15, 2005.....	\$325	Guest Luncheon Ticket.....	\$ 45
Late / Feb. 15 – March 15, 2005.....	\$340	Guest Reception Ticket.....	\$ 25
Robert Olen Butler PreConferenceWorkshop...	\$ 65		

TOTAL..... \$ _____

Registration cancellation prior to March 1, 2006 will be assessed a \$50 fee. Except in emergency conditions, cancellations after March 1 will forfeit the entire fee. Make checks payable to **Ninc** or submit credit card information. Returned-check fee of \$25. Mail to: Susan Gable, PO Box 9313, Erie PA 16505

Payment Info: Check # _____ **or Credit Card (circle one):** **MC** **Visa** **Amex** **Discover** **Paypal**

Card #: _____ **Expires:** _____

Name on Card: _____ **Amount Total:** _____

Hotel reservation to be handled individually. You must first register for the conference to get the Ninc preferred room rate. A Group Number will be provided to you by email or regular mail with confirmation of your conference registration upon verification of payment. Contact the Hotel Monteleone at Phone: 504-523-3341, Toll-Free: 800-535-9595, Online at reservations@hotelmonteleone.com (<http://hotelmonteleone.com>)

**For more information, contact Susan Gable at: sgable@susangable.com
Or write to: Susan Gable, PO Box 9313, Erie PA 16505**

Different Voices, Different Names: Writing in More than One Genre

BY SHIRLEY JUMP

One of the smartest lessons I ever learned as a freelance writer was not to keep all my eggs in one basket. Spreading the eggs among a lot of different chicken coops kept me from starving when one market dried up or a new editor took over the helm of a publication. In book publishing, for many Ninc authors, that same adage holds true.

However, writing in more than one genre presents a few challenges, from juggling multiple and sometimes conflicting deadlines, to meeting reader expectations. Each author has handled the issues in his or her own way, but always with the focus on the work itself.

THE BONUSES

Laura Resnick fell into writing for two genres. She had been writing as Laura Leone for Harlequin, then was invited to write a science fiction/fantasy short story for an anthology. In those days, her pseudonym was tied up, so she took on a new name, her real name, for the other work. "I did the story because it sounded like a fun challenge in a manageable timeframe; but I unwittingly began a whole new career path which led (so far) to my selling nearly 50 sf/f short stories, eight fantasy novels, and becoming a columnist for the *SFWA Bulletin* for three years. From little acorns do busy careers grow."

During that time, she maintained her romance career. Resnick says the whole thing has been a win-win. "I'm a single, self-supporting writer with no other income, and

there are many occasions when I'd have starved and/or been out of work for a long time if I didn't have two markets."

In addition, the dual career has given her more exposure to multiple facets of the publishing industry, which has, in turn, helped her make more intelligent decisions. "Working in two genres happens to have serendipitously positioned me well for the current cross-genre trend in publishing. My most recent contract was for three cross-genre novels, books which the publisher hopes it can sell to both fantasy—and—romance readers, both of which audiences it's targeting with its marketing. I think that two-genre writers are perfectly positioned for the growing interest in cross-genre that now exists in multiple areas of fiction."

Cynthia Thomason did the same thing. When her historical romance career stalled in 2000, she switched gears to historical mysteries. For her, the benefits have extended into her writing. "I found the mystery genre an interesting and challenging diversion from romances, especially in the area of plotting. Mysteries must be very tightly plotted with all loose ends coming together at the end. It has been a great learning experience for me, a former seat-of-the-pants-er, by teaching me to write with a 'road map' for accuracy."

She also found that the mystery market helped her hit a wider demographic, a bonus. In addition, her mysteries are published in hardcover, which opens up the library market.

Beverly Brandt believes in the more eggs, more baskets concept.

When she hit an obstacle in making her editor happy at St. Martin's Press, she decided to reinvent herself with a kick-ass suspense series.

It sold fast, and then St. Martin's bought more romantic comedies from her, one of which was optioned for a movie. "My career, which had seemed so dead at the beginning of 2003, completely turned around in the span of three months!" For her, the benefit of having more security and a greater sense of creative freedom have been coupled with more frequency of releases, which helps her promotion-wise.

THE PITFALLS

Writing in two different genres can be difficult, and can cost more than it pays—in readers and confusion. Lawrence Watt-Evans did a little of everything, writing fantasy, sci-fi, horror, tie-in novels and comic books. Originally, he wrote everything under one name, until he realized that low sales in one genre sometimes hurt sales in the others. He invented a second name for his sci-fi and tie-in work, leaving the Watt-Evans name for fantasy.

In the end, the fantasy fared better. When he had some health problems, he decided to concentrate solely on that genre. "My experience was that when I was writing in multiple genres it hurt my sales noticeably, because readers wouldn't know what to expect when they saw my name on a book."

He tried cross-promotion, but didn't see that it worked very well. However, he is still energized by alternating between light and fluffy fantasy novels and darker sto- ▶

Different Voices, Different Names

► ries. In the future, he hopes to go back to balancing two genres.

Thomason found that the money she earned in mystery was lower than in romance. Though she loves mystery writing, she has expanded into contemporary romance and learned to put the bigger paying work ahead of the lower paying. "With careful planning I've been able to find time to devote to both genres."

Although there are a lot of pros, Brandt has seen an equal number of drawbacks. She said it takes a lot of time, energy, and money to maintain two different personas. She also worries that she may lose readers who don't "get" her other work. Another concern is booksellers basing orders on sales of her other genre books. Finally, Brandt said an additional pitfall can be "splitting your focus between genres can mean you don't have time to take advantage of certain opportunities in one or the other genre when they arise (i.e. turning down anthology offers, not being able to target category lines that may help build single title sales, not being able to write fast enough to get quicker release dates in one genre, etc.)."

Lillian Stewart Carl, who writes contemporary mysteries and fantasies, said sometimes "it's hard to get readers when you're not doing the same thing over and over. Some people who know me from f/sf don't even know I write mysteries, too. Not everyone wants the genre-blending that I love."

Writing under two names can make it difficult, if not impossible, for readers to find the other books.

Eileen Dryer writes romance as Kathleen Korbel and suspense as Eileen Dreyer and said that letting readers know she was doing the two different types of books was one of the biggest obstacles she had to overcome in the beginning of her split career.

TWO NAMES ARE BETTER THAN ONE?

The decision whether or not to use a second name for the other genre is a personal one. Some authors like the separation, others were forced to use a second name (because their first publisher owned their pseudonym) and still others chose a new name to start a totally new type of book.

Debbie Federici writes for two radically different genres: young adult and erotic romance. Because they serve two very separate readers, she has a second name (Cheyenne McCray) for the erotic books. "I keep them publicly entirely separate. Can't have the kids reading my steamy books! However, at conventions like the recent Romantic Times one, I served on panels for both. I signed books from each genre there. But I would never mix it anywhere else."

Charlotte Hubbard also works in two vastly different genres: sweet inspirations and erotica. For the latter, she uses the name Melissa MacNeal. "While Melissa made no secret about being Charlotte, and while my Leisure editor knows I was looking to also write as Melissa if possible (whereas, other strictly "Christian" publishers wouldn't touch me with a 10-foot pole now),

I'm going to do my best to keep this new Charlotte venture unconnected to my Melissa work."

Using two names (Beverly Brandt for romance and Jacey Ford for suspense) helps Brandt keep the books straight in her own mind. "When I'm writing a suspense and start going off to something funny, I can pull myself back by saying, 'No, this isn't a Beverly book. Jacey doesn't do funny.'"

Thomason uses one name for both genres. "I find this works best for me because I promote my name instead of my books. For printed promo materials I use a generic phrase: *Love, laughter, and mayhem*, by Cynthia Thomason."

Julie Leto writes hot romances for Harlequin and "chick thrill" for Pocket. She said the single title books are not romances and are a continuing series, thus allowing her to work in a completely different manner. She agrees with using a single name, but with a tiny difference—for romances, she puts her middle name in there: Julie Elizabeth Leto, but for her Pocket books, she drops the extra name, so that readers browsing under "L" will still be able to find her. "When I chose to do two different genres, I've made sure that both books fulfill what I like to call the 'Julie Leto Promise' which is that they are hot and sexy. That won't ever change, no matter what kind of book I'm doing. It's my signature. If I ever write a non-sexy book, I'll probably take a different name."

PROMOTING: ALL-FOR-ONE?

Most of the authors interviewed have two websites, one for each genre, with cross-links back to the other site. Dreyer says she likes to be upfront with her readers, which hopefully encourages them to try one of her other books. "I feel that my romance readers, who've been with me the longest, are perfectly happy to experiment as long as I let them know (by using my other

name) that it's something completely different."

Carl says that as with any genre, meeting reader expectations doesn't change with the name or genre. She believes in cross-promoting, but says there will always be that one reader who has a complaint. "I always hope someone picking up one sort of book will enjoy it enough to get the others —although this does lead to some interesting reviews! For example, one reviewer said that she thought *Time Enough to Die* was my worst book because the romance element was so slight, another one said it was my best book —for exactly the same reason!"

THE BALANCING ACT

For some authors, juggling one genre and meeting deadlines on a continual basis is hard enough. For dual-genre authors, those concerns are multiplied. It takes a lot to —

essentially — run from chicken coop to chicken coop, meeting readers, connecting with booksellers and simply making multiple deadlines.

"It's not easy, and I would absolutely not recommend it for anyone who is not prolific," Brandt says. "I think it would be very difficult to try to establish yourself in two genres if you only wrote one book a year."

Carl, like many of the authors, says balancing the two careers is time-consuming and nearly impossible so she has decided to simply do her best and keep her focus on writing well. "Trying to keep up with both fields, such as attending f/sf and mystery conventions, reading author's chat lists, etc., eats up a lot of time and energy. While I'm known in both fields, I'm not a major player in either one."

In the end, however, the one reason quoted by all these authors

for writing in a different genre was a simple one: it's fun. "Working in more than one genre," Leto says, "helps keep down the boredom and forces me to stretch my wings in different directions." Although it takes her some mental time to switch gears, "once I get into the groove, it's fun to change things around."

Booksellers' Best Award winner Shirley Jump spends her days eating, shopping, and writing romantic comedies with recipes and attitude for Kensington Books (The Angel Craved Lobster, August 2005) and for Silhouette Romance (The Marine's Kiss, August 2005; The Dating Game, December 2005) to feed her shoe addiction and avoid housework. A wife and mother of two, her sole mission in life is to humiliate her children in public. Visit her website at www.shirleyjump.com.

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 15 days of this NINK issue, these authors shall be accepted as members of Ninc:

New Applicants:

Sandy Blair, Plano TX
Sherry Crane, Carmel IN
Carol Culver (Carol Grace),
Woodside CA
Stephanie Feagan, Midland TX
Diane Noble, Palm Desert CA
Kate Rothwell (Summer Devon),
West Hartford CT
Shari Shattuck, Tujunga CA

Katia Spiegelman (Kate Pepper),
Brooklyn NY
Carol Wagner (Marisa Carroll),
Deshler OH

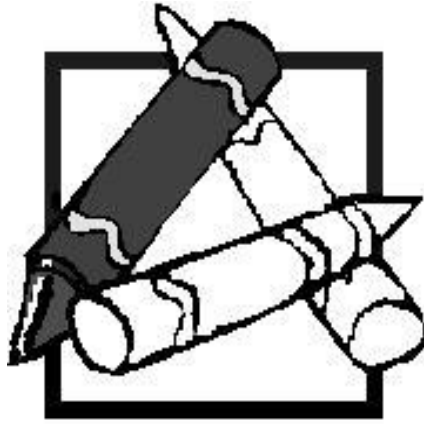
New Members:

Judie Aitken, Indianapolis IN
Andrea Boeshaar, Milwaukee WI
Cathy Clamp, Brady TX
Anna DeStefano, Lawrenceville GA
Mary J. Forbes, Langley, B.C.,
Canada
Denise Koch (Denise Lynn),
Monclova OH
Sherry Lewis (Sammi Carter),
North Salt Lake UT
Lucy Monroe, Hillsboro OR

Beth Pattillo (Bethany Brooks),
Nashville TN
Stobie Piel, Orrs Island ME
Debbie Raleigh (Deborah Raleigh),
Ewing MO
Myretta Robens, Medford MA
Candace Sams (C.S.Chatterly),
Grand Bay AL
Mary Schramski, Henderson NV

**Ninc has room to grow...
recommend membership
to your colleagues.
Prospective members
may apply online at
www.ninc.com.**

Crayon on my



Key board

In Memoriam

BY JANELLE CLARE SCHNEIDER

The day before I started this column, I received news that shook me to my core. A writer-friend, Janet, whom I'd known only by email but with whom I'd formed a kind of long distance connection, had passed away from a cancer I didn't even know she had. I was, and still am, reeling from the loss.

I'm also stunned by the impact the news has had on me.

It brings back vividly the day we learned our own Cheryl Anne Porter had lost her struggle with the cancer we were all so sure she'd beat.

I spent a good portion of that day, and the days which followed, trying to figure out why the death of a woman I'd never met should impact me so deeply.

It had a lot to do with losing my mother to the same disease only 13 months previously. Cheryl had been "proof" to me that cancer doesn't always win. Losing her was, in some ways, like losing my mom all over again.

But what puzzled me most about my reaction both then and more recently, is the depth of loss I've felt over two women I never met. I didn't even swap emails with Cheryl as I had with Janet. Yet both deaths have left me feeling wounded.

I think it has something to do with the sense of community among us writers. We view life differently from the majority of the population, and our "differentness" gives us a bond with one another. We tell each other our secrets. Maybe not our family-shadow type secrets, but we often discuss our out-of-balance eating habits, our revenge fantasies when strangers dis our books, how we feel about our spouses when we're in deadline purgatory.

As writers, we catch glimpses of each other's secret selves -the pajama-clad, soda-swilling, frightfully

focused or hopelessly undisciplined creatures we are when shut away in our offices.

Our stock-in-trade is emotions, and we share emotions with one another regularly. I wouldn't have recognized Cheryl on the street, but I know she and her computer were often at odds, hilariously so. I wouldn't have recognized Janet's voice on the phone, but I'll never forget that her dream vacation involves an Antonio Banderas look-alike as a member of the support staff.

Janet used to create online writers' retreats, complete with imaginary luxurious settings, movie-star doubles as our wait-staff for the week, and the surprise "baskets" delivered by "Antonio" to our email inboxes each morning of the retreat. I know I'm not the only person whose creativity was set free and enhanced by the fictitious details she wove into our experience.

Cheryl's column were one of the first things I read each month when my *NINK* arrived. At first, it was her quirky and bluntly honest perspective on writing that captured me. When cancer invaded, then advanced, her humor and again, her honesty, gave me the courage to hope she'd beat it. I still miss those Sticky Notes from the Edge.

Because both women shared themselves so openly, each has become part of who I am. By nature, I'm a fairly serious person. When I wanted to learn to write "funny" I went to Cheryl's columns. When I develop workshops for writers, I think about Janet's richly imaginative retreats and how the details made all the difference.

Both the writing community and the world at large are made poorer by the loss of these two women. I hate saying goodbye, even to those I've never met.

Janet and Cheryl, you both are missed, and will not be forgotten.

Janelle Clare Schneider also misses her friends, Don and LaVerne Yoder, who died in a highway crash in August 2002, and her mother who passed away in June 2003.

Bits'n'Pieces

Look who's reading . . .

At the beginning of June, the Gallup poll reported that one in every two American is reading some type of book. About half the people polled said they had read more than 5 books during the year. These numbers haven't changed much in the last 10 years. No one agrees on how they select what they read: by author, recommendation, or browsing.

Returns Turn to Pulp

The Wall Street Journal reports the strange tale of publishing book returns. Hardcover returns jumped to 34% in 2003 from 28% in 1993, according to Albert N. Greco (Fordham Graduate School of Business), a leading industry statistician. The Association of American Publishers reports that 2004 returns had a wholesale value of \$801 million, up from \$743 million in 2003. Everyone claims to hate the system and wants to change, but no one seems to have a solution. The practice has created an ironic cycle. Because of the volume of books coming back, publishers raise the price of new books to counteract the loss on returns. The price of hardback books has increased 118%, while the Consumer Price Index rose 71% for the same period. For the full article: http://online.wsj.com/article_email/0,,SB111775439006449853-lj4Nolal4npuqZ3SGaKiAm5,00.html

Good Numbers, Bad Numbers

The Bowker Annual Report on the publishing industry is out, announcing book production increased 30% over 2 years for a total of 195,000 books in 2004. Sales, however, only increased 5%. The production increase was credited to small publishers (including self publishers) with less than 10% being attributed to the larger publishers. Adult fiction increased 43% to a total of 25,184 for 2004.

Nominees for the Man Booker International Prize:

Ismail Kadare (Albania) was announced as the first winner of the Man Booker International Prize. The chair of the judging panel called him, "A universal writer in the tradition of storytelling that goes back to Homer." The shortlist of finalists included Margaret Atwood (Canada), Saul Bellow (Canada), Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Colombia), Gunter Grass (Germany), Milan Kundera (Czech Republic), Stanislaw Lem (Poland),

Doris Lessing (UK), Ian McEwan (UK), Naguib Mahfouz (Egypt), Tomas Eloy Martinez (Argentina), Kenzaburo Oe (Japan), Cynthia Ozick (US), Philip Roth (US), Muriel Spark (UK), Antonio Tabucchi (Italy), John Updike (US), and Abraham B Yehoshua (Israel)

Veteran Reviewer Wants to Reclaim Life

Anne Larsen, *Kirkus Reviews* editor, left the magazine in June, after reviewing 60,000+ books since 1985. No successor has been announced yet.

Spyware Legislation Leaves the House

HR 29 (sponsored by Mary Bono, R-CA) and HR 744 (sponsored by Zoe Lofgren D-CA) are two bills for the protection of Internet users. The former includes the creation of web regulations for software manufacturers while the latter sets up a shorter list of actions that would result in felony charges. The Senate is still lagging behind, but does want to make sure they take action now that the House has moved forward.

LSU Press Returns to Fiction

Yellow Shoe Fiction will launch in fall 2005. Although they did well with *A Confederacy of Dunces* in the 1980s, the press discontinued original fiction in 1994. There will be one title each fall in a trade edition, starting in October with *If the Sky Falls* by Nicholas Montemarano. The line will complement LSU's Voices of the South, trade reprints of fiction by acclaimed southern writers.

Google Print for Libraries Not So Popular

A letter from the Association of American University Presses cited the first concerns about copyright problems and piracy. Both Wiley and Random House followed suit. Rumor is that Wiley has asked to be removed from the program.

The debate continues on whether this is a terrific program to help libraries digitize their collection, or a less-than-altruistic program that provides unauthorized use of materials. Are the companies allowing enough material to be available to create fair-use problems or not?

Bits Compiled by Sally Hawkes



The Care and Feeding of the Girls in the Basement . . .

BY BARBARA SAMUEL

Days of Our Lives

We're all stuck with certain themes. In novels, and in our other work.

Last night, I happened to be out just before sunset. A fitful rainstorm was passing over the mountains in Colorado Springs, but it wasn't a fierce storm. Sun broke through the clouds, here and there.

Now, the western American sky is vast and changeable and often astonishing. The clear, dry air adds a clarity of light that isn't found elsewhere. The vistas, framed by those burly mountains, are amazing enough that it's just not possible to get jaded.

I have seen some gorgeous things in the Colorado skies, but I've never seen one like the one I saw last night. The billowing clouds were fringed with the phenomenon of walking rain, where you can see the rain falling high in the air, though much of it evaporates in the dry air before it ever hits the ground. A blister of sunlight, reddish orange, bled into the sky right over the ragged blue line of mountains, and washed the vast clouds with pink the color of a baby's lips. Against the hard slate gray to the east, a fierce neon rainbow blurily burned through the dark.

My companion and I drove and drove and drove, incredulous at the display, dazzled, commenting again and again at the stupendous, spectacular, unbelievable

show until we ran out of adjectives. It was the kind of beauty you want to paint, to eat, to weave into your hair.

I've been circling this column for over a week. I tried writing three others, but they refused to get on the page. The Girls were insistent I should be writing about moments, even if I've written about them before. Time. Experiences. I've just turned in an entire novel in which the protagonist is devoted to trying to understand what the hours of her life mean—not the days, the seasons, the decades, the hours. Obviously, it is interesting and powerful stuff to me, and I haven't said all I need to say about it here.

Buddhist and Hindu practices of meditation both offer the imperative to be present in our lives as they are. It's enormously difficult to practice, because our nature is to run away from the dark stuff and rush toward the happy things, but I have begun to suspect that it is in the valleys, in learning to befriend sorrow and rage and despair, look at them as objectively as we look at the other experiences of our characters, that we tap into the power of whatever theme is most important to us as individual writers. It certainly seems to be where I find the vast majority of my own novels (which are not, at least in my opinion, unceasingly dark things).

As with a character's journey, it's in the valleys, not the high points, where we learn.

My grandmother, most beloved, is descending into dementia. It is a disease of moments, because she is only cognizant of this minute. I went to visit her one afternoon, and we sat outside and admired the spills of petunias on the patio of the nursing home where she now must live. We chatted inconsequentially, and she sometimes remembered, abruptly, something from another time, or a name that had escaped her, but mostly not. As I stood up to go, she dabbed away a tear and said, "Thanks so much for coming, sugar, even if I might or might not remember you were here."

I haven't been as present as I'd like, honestly. It's hard. It makes me sad, and I don't want to cry in front of her and make it all seem dire and awful, because the whole point of visiting is to help her enjoy whatever these moments are. In avoiding her, I avoid sitting down with my sorrow, and in turn, avoid these very hours of my life.

And yet, since learning to sit with sorrow and learning how to manage it is one of the lessons of mid-life, the universe regularly arranges to let me visit it in some other way. I find an old letter and remember a younger me, one who was earnest and optimistic, and remember the happiness with which I was contemplating my marriage. I remember being her, and thinking I would know more than I do at this point. I wrote a whole book and realized at the end that I was revisiting the death of a friend when I was seven, a wound that's lain quietly in the dark parts of my brain all these years, never discussed, and now emerged, whole, to dance a part in a book.

Funny how third grade is all over that book. Funny how we access this hour or that for the work in progress, how you never know what year or what experience or which dream is going to show up to splash color and verisimilitude into the work.

When I was in junior high, I had a best friend—let's call her Julie—with whom I formed the symbiotic friendship that sometimes arrives at that age. We spent every waking hour in contact with each other, meeting before school to drink orange juice, arranging our schedules so our classes would be the same. During lunches, we followed boys who didn't know we existed. At night, we talked on the phone, then wrote notes to each other. We slept at each other's houses, traded clothes, brushed each other's hair.

Somewhere toward the end of 9th grade, her parents divorced. Badly. It was very hard on the family, very hard on us because our parents were friends. Very, very hard on Julie. I knew she was in trouble, that there was something not quite right about the way she was handling everything, but my limited experience didn't know how bad it was.

Until the morning my father gently informed me that she had tried to commit suicide the night before. She lived, thank heaven. The divorce and life separated us.

Two years ago, I had an email out of the blue. It was Julie, and we had lunch, exuberantly. She was married, had two children a little younger than mine. It was illuminating—and healing—to realize the disaster of her parents' divorce, occurring with such drama at a dramatic point in my life, had given me a lot of echoes while I was divorcing.

We stayed in touch, loosely, enjoying the sweet oddity of being back in touch. About a year ago, out of the blue, her husband asked for a divorce.

She fell apart.

This time, I knew what to do. This time, when she called me, hysterical and falling to pieces, I was old enough and strong enough to be sure she didn't try to commit suicide again. It was touch and go for awhile, but I'm pretty sure we're on the other side now.

I make her go on hikes with me. I make her call me when she's feeling lost. We meet at Denny's and drink coffee by the gallon, and we talk about guys, and dating and dreams, just as we did once upon a time. Instead of complaining about parents, we now complain about children and exes. We walk in the mountains for hours and hours, just as we did when we were thirteen.

We are learning that sorrow is not an enemy. It is not something to overcome. It just is, and it is precious, not something to be trounced or dodged or avoided. It's a part of the river of life, natural and honorable. If I let her, Sorrow will waft in and sit down beside me, gently, an old friend I don't have to fear. I know her now. She is that softest shade of pale gray, that mistiness of an autumn morning. Her hair is fine as spiderwebs, her voice surprisingly bracing. She comes to say, simply: time is passing. Pay attention.

I suspect that writers make a bargain with the gods before we're born: we agree to write, but we also agree to really experience everything that crosses our paths so we can express it for those who cannot. We name sorrow and joy. We name love and beauty, darkness and disaster and hope.

There is a gift to the process. If I let Sorrow come sit down with me, it's funny how her sister, Joy, then feels welcome, drifting in on fringed pink clouds, most dazzling in a sky ripped with pink rain and a fierce neon rainbow.

Barbara Samuel has just finished a novel set in Manitou Springs, and is more than a little punchy with the dazzlement of a summer in Colorado.

Election Notice

President-elect: Pat McLaughlin
Secretary: Linda Madl
Treasurer: Deborah Gordon

Kelly McClymer
Joanna Novins
Kathryn Shay

Proposed Nominees for 2006 Nominating Committee

(Listed in alphabetical order,
five to be elected):

Beverly Brandt
Carole Nelson Douglas
Eve Gaddy
Sally Hawkes
Liz Curtiss Higgs
Eloisa James

As set forth in article IX, Section 4 of the By-laws, additional nominations may be made in writing if signed by the nominee and at least ten (10) active members who have not signed the nominations of any other person for the same position.

Such nominations must be made by August 18, 2005. Mail all written nominations to Annette Mahon: 6002 East Donna Circle: Paradise Valley, AZ 85253-1730.

Bits'n'Pieces

VIACOM Split and Simon and Schuster

Simon and Schuster will be grouped under CBS Corp, which also includes CBS, UPN, Infinity Broadcasting and Paramount Parks. MTV and BET will remain under VIACOM. Speculation regarding the move is that S&S publishing group will not be sold off, for now.

Book Reviews – Plus and Minus

The Boston Herald has announced daily book coverage will be cut. The paper will not hire a replacement for long-time book review editor and garden columnist Rosemary Herbert. The five-year-old book club was discontinued in January, and a page-long book section on Sunday ceased several months ago. Some reviews and book stories will appear, but on no specific schedule.

Meanwhile the *Los Angeles Times* is in search of a new review editor for what *PW* is calling, "one of the most influential review jobs in the industry."

NINK

a publication of Novelists, Inc.

An Organization for Writers of Popular Fiction
P.O. Box 1166
Mission KS 66222-0166

Publishing Services by Huseby Agency, Ltd.

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
FARGO ND
PERMIT #281