



The official newsletter
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a professional organization
of writers of popular fiction



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President's Voice

By Wayne Stinnett



It's June! For many of us, that means kids at home for the next couple of months and the added pressure of working around them and their needs. It also heralds in the annual family vacation planning: trips abroad, or to the beach, or maybe to the mountains. If you go anywhere this summer, keep your eyes and ears open. There are characters and plot lines all around us.

Early last month, I was part of a conference call with representatives from Amazon to discuss scammers and cheats on their platform. On the call from Amazon were David Naggar, former VP of Kindle Content, now overseeing Kindle book business worldwide, and Chuck Kronbach, head of Indie Print and Digital. Also on the call were representatives from Authors Guild, RWA, and several other writers' organizations.

We discussed what Amazon is doing to curtail black hat tactics that pull money away from legitimate authors and ways of reporting them. From our perspective, sending an email to Amazon's "Contact Us" form usually results in a canned message being returned a day or two later and little else. Amazon is working on this but said that emails are never ignored. They receive tens of thousands per day, and after sending the canned reply, lower level employees forward the email to someone who can act on it. Mr. Naggar said that Amazon would create an email address (which they have since done) available only to leadership of the many writers' organizations, where we could report compiled and vetted complaints directly to those who can take action, skipping over the lower level employee and the canned messages. He went on to say that Amazon rarely replies with what they've done (or are doing) to stop scammers, as that would tend to tip them off. I like to think I'm a pretty good judge of people and I got the impression that both Amazon reps were forthright and sincere.

We don't want these kinds of people in our organization and have taken steps to keep them out. However, an "author" was recently admitted as a member, to whom nobody objected as a potential member when the name was posted in the newsletter. Only when the name was posted as a full member did it come to light that the "author" was actually an organization or author mill. Now I have to rescind membership with no refund, due to falsification of application information. While this is my job as president, it never should have gotten this far.

Our membership committee can only do so much to vet potential members, and it really is up to the hive mind to keep a watchful eye out. We need you—the members—to go and read the list of potential members every month and report any issues to the membership committee within 15 days. So please read each name of these potential members and raise an objection if you suspect they aren't the type of person we want in NINC. That's all you have to do. The membership committee will then follow up on the objection and present it to the board of directors. In total, there's about a dozen people who make up the membership committee and board. Our membership numbers over 1,000—and that means we need your help. Be vigilant in the company that you keep.

Also in other news, on May 1, the Copyright Alternative in Small-Claims Enforcement Act of 2019 (CASE Act) was introduced in the house (H.R. 2426) by representatives Hakeem Jeffries and Doug Collins and in the senate (S. 1273) by senators John Kennedy, Thom Tillis, Dick Durbin, and Mazie Hirono. Original house co-sponsors include Jerry Nadler, Hank Johnson, Martha Roby, Judy Chu, Ben Cline, Ted Lieu, and Brian Fitzpatrick. The legislation will create a voluntary small claims board within the US Copyright Office that will provide copyright owners with an alternative to the expensive process of bringing copyright claims, including infringement and misrepresentation, in federal court. This new board, called the Copyright Claims Board (CCB), would allow recovery in each case of up to \$30,000 in damages total, with a cap of \$15,000 in statutory damages per work infringed. If your representative and senator isn't listed above, please contact them and urge them to support this bill. I intentionally left off the (D) and (R) after their names, as this is simple, commonsense legislation that has bipartisan support.

On May 3, the Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) and Internet Archive was handed its first court defeat. A German court found that distribution of digital copies from Internet Archive servers in the USA to readers in Germany was subject to German copyright law, and could be a violation of German law unless the works are in the public domain as determined by German law. This isn't a final ruling, but it's a step in the right direction. There was also a similar denial of a motion to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction under US law. From what I've learned, this is the first court case brought against Internet Archive or a library for "Controlled Digital Lending."

Wayne Stinnett, NINC President
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NINC Member Benefits

Don't forget to sign up for the [email loop](#), [critique/brainstorming group](#), and the members-only [Facebook group](#) if you haven't already. The Pro Services Directory, member [discount page](#), and [sample letters](#) are also great resources.

Missing a newsletter? Past issues can be found [here](#). You can also [propose an article](#) or submit a [letter to the editor](#).

Accessing the NINC Website

Not sure how to log in to the NINC website? Visit the login page here: <https://ninc.com/membership-overview/login-to-ninc/>

Wayne Stinnett writes your typical murder and mayhem in paradise. His characters and plots come from real people and situations he's encountered, fictionalized to protect the guilty.

September 25 - September 29, 2019



Conference is shaping up beautifully! We anticipate having more sponsors than ever before. Also, *brand new* this year, we're hosting a Trade Show on Friday!

Registration deadline: August 1, 2019

Registration: <https://ninc.com/conferences/registration/2019-member-registration/>
2019 Conference Assistant/Industry Guest registration: <https://ninc.com/conferences/registration/ninc-2019-conference-non-member/>

Conference FAQs: <https://ninc.com/conferences/about-the-ninc-conference/ninc-conference-faq/>

Conference e-list: <https://groups.io/g/BeachNINC2019>

Logos For Authors

Worth A Thousand Words

By Mindy Klasky



Quick! Think of a logo!

Chances are, you thought of one of the most famous brands in the world: an apple with a bite taken out of the right side or golden arches or a swoosh on the side of a sneaker... Logos are graphic trademarks, quick-and-dirty advertising tools, immediately conveying the source, sponsorship, or origin of a product.

Authors can use logos to increase brand identification and reader loyalty. Traditional, indie, and hybrid authors can use logos on their websites, newsletters, and social media to convey their ownership of those promotional tools. Indie authors can go further, using logos to brand their publishing companies or to indicate all the books in a single series.



I use the above logo for each book set in my Magical Washington Universe. (The universe currently consists of four different series—Washington Witches, Washington Vampires, Washington Warders, and Washington Medical: Vampire Unit.) This logo was designed by a cover designer.

What Makes a Good Logo?

The best logos are easily read designs that are unique to the owner and used in a consistent manner. “Easily read” often means a simple design—a device or line drawing that can be interpreted by all potential customers, even when it’s depicted at a small size. Fussy, complicated designs are often difficult to parse; they can end up looking like amorphous blobs. Too many details can lead to confusion, alienating readers who try to identify all the individual elements of a design. (As with book covers, logos are *advertisements*, not illustrations.)

Good logos are also unique. Every romance author could use a heart to designate her work. The trick is creating a heart design that is different from every other heart design already out there. There’s little reason to invest in a logo if the effect of that investment will be to promote every romance author in the world. Therefore, a romance author who writes Scottish historicals might incorporate a specific tartan in her logo. An author who writes hockey romances might include sticks or a puck. Color combinations and placement of elements can further increase individuality.

Prior to investing in a logo, authors should review existing designs in their field, to avoid infringing the trademarks of others. This review should include studying the websites and books of competitors as well as searching the records at the United States Patent and Trademark Office: <https://www.uspto.gov/trademarks-application-process/search-trademark-database>. Logo owners may have protectable rights, even if they haven’t registered their logo as a federal trademark. While this review takes time and effort, it can also spark new ideas about possible other logos to use.



I commissioned the above logo for my indie-published books, but I had to abandon the design when I discovered a pre-existing publisher using a similar name. (My initial searches were limited to the specific words **Rabbit Hole Press**. Committing a rookie mistake, I neglected to search for synonyms of **Press**. I can only blame my enthusiasm about the new logo for my oversight.) This logo was designed by a graphic artist who competed in a contest at 48hourslogo.com.

After investing hard work in creating a logo, authors should use their unique designs consistently. Logos should be limited to specific colors (often, black, white, and a single alternate color). If words are part of the logo, those words should only be printed in specific fonts. Logos should never be “stretched” horizontally or vertically. Major corporations that own

logos compile extensive guidelines on how their designs can be used. Authors don't have to go to that extent, but they should manage their valuable intellectual property with care.

How to Create a Logo

If you have a background in graphic design, congratulations! You have the skills to create your own logo. For the rest of us, our attempts at creating a logo are likely to look amateurish, doing more harm than good. An all-out author brand is not the time to resort to unmodified or minimally modified clip art.

Some authors hire cover designers to create logos. There are multiple advantages of using cover designers for logo creation:

- Most cover designers are familiar with genre conventions;
- Most cover designers have ample access to stock art for use in building logos; and
- Indie and hybrid authors have likely worked with one or more cover designers, creating solid business relationships.

Cover designers, though, may not be the best option for logo design. Many cover designers don't understand the value of simplicity in a logo; they're accustomed to working with a variety of artistic elements and their logo designs may be too complex to function well in the marketplace. Also, some cover designers don't price their work attractively when doing logo design. While covers typically cost several hundred dollars, good logos can be purchased for far less.

As an alternative, authors can hire graphic designers through "gig economy" sites specifically created for logo design, such as <https://www.48hourslogo.com>. At these sites, an author sponsors a "contest," describing basic requirements for a logo and inviting artists to submit designs. Typically, the contest is open for 24-72 hours, during which time the author can refine the initial contest request and suggest corrections to participating artists. At the conclusion of the contest, the author chooses a limited number of finalists. The author can request changes to the finalists' entries (e.g., changing fonts, changing colors, or emphasizing one or more elements of the design). Upon receiving the revised entries, the author chooses a winner. The sponsoring website acts as an escrow agent, holding the author's money until electronic files for a satisfactory design have been delivered to the author.

Logo contests have the advantage of giving the author a variety of options to choose from (which can be especially useful if the author doesn't have a firm concept for the ultimate logo at the outset of the design process). They are cost-effective as well; logo contests at reputable sites can be conducted for approximately \$125.

But logo contests aren't perfect. Many designers at contest sites are not familiar with genre conventions; they might need to be coached on appropriate symbols. Some do not speak English as their first language, and their initial understanding of the assignment might be incorrect. Typically, many logos are uninteresting or too similar to other designs, but a few stars stand out.



I use the above logo for my indie-published books. This logo was designed by a graphic artist who competed in a contest at 48hourslogo.com.

To have and to hold

Regardless of the source of a logo—a cover designer or a logo contest website—the artist should provide the author with a number of computer files, including:

- The final design in agreed-upon color options (e.g., black, white, and red), with a colored background (typically, black and white) and with a clear background.
- The final design in agreed-upon formats. Typically, these include JPG, PNG, and EPS (for use in Photoshop and similar programs).
- All fonts used in the design (or, at a minimum, the name of the font so the author can match it for future design projects).

Logos are powerful marketing tools. Educated authors are empowered to make the most out of their unique designs.

USA Today bestselling author [Mindy Klasky](#) learned to read when her parents shoved a book in her hands and told her she could travel anywhere through stories. As a writer, Mindy has traveled through various genres, including cozy paranormal, hot contemporary romance, and traditional fantasy. Her [Intellectual Property Bootcamp for Writers](#) online course provides simple, straightforward legal explanations for authors. (Nothing in this article is actual legal advice for any author's specific situation.)

How to Book Readings Directly with Bookstores

Why you don't need a go-between to host live events

By Rachel Kramer Bussel



Whether you're a traditionally published or self-published author, you don't have to wait for someone else to ask you to give a reading or host a talk or panel at a bookstore. You can do it yourself! Many independent bookstores are open to events booked directly with authors, which allows you greater flexibility in planning book events.

Proposing a book event

Your first step should be exploring a bookstore's website and seeing if they have instructions posted about event outreach. Before contacting the store, gather the relevant information about your title, including the publisher and distributor, publicist contact (if applicable), ISBN, your bio, genre and book description, and ideal date range for the event. Keep in mind that to remain relevant and timely, most stories will want to hold book events around the time of your book release, or within a few weeks.

If the store already stocks your book, you're one step ahead of the game, but that's not a requirement. As long as your book is available through a publisher or distributor, the bookstore can usually order it. Some stores, such as [Print: A Bookstore](#) in Portland, Maine, also have a consignment option for self-published titles, while others, such as [Booksmith](#) in San Francisco, only do consignment on a limited basis and are less likely to accept books without a distributor.

All the bookstore staffers I contacted for this article said that they prefer authors to contact the store via email. This makes it easy for them to keep track of and respond to your request. As Amy Stephenson, former events director at Booksmith, who is still involved with the store's marketing, explained, "We get roughly half a dozen pitches *per day*, so be considerate and follow our guidelines." Those are located in a Word file in the [contact section](#) of their website.

Stephenson noted that the guidelines, which tell authors to send an email, aren't optional. "Do not show up or call the store asking for 'the events person.'" Stephenson also suggested

getting the name of the person in charge of events before you email a store. Yes, there's a real person on the other end of your email who will be deciding whether to book your event or not.

When to contact stores

You will ideally want to have a range of event dates in mind, planned three to six months ahead of time, depending on the store's policies.

According to Jonathan Woollen, event coordinator at [Politics and Prose](#), which has three Washington, D.C., locations, "We generally schedule our talks four to six months in advance of the program date. In almost all cases, we try to have that date fall within a few weeks of the relevant book's release."

Print: A Bookstore considers pitches three to four months ahead of the requested date. If your book publishes in January, you'll want to contact them in mid to late September, with an eye toward finalizing the event date by the end of October or early November.

Print: A Bookstore co-owner Emily Russo stressed that it's important not to get your heart set on a specific date, but remain flexible. "When pitching an event, give a range of dates when you might be available," Russo advised. "Writing to us and saying, 'I see from your events calendar that you have June 10th open. I'd like to book an event at your store that evening' may result in a 'no.' Yes, technically we may not have something booked *that* night, but we may already have two other events booked that week that would stretch the audience too thin."

Make the case for why you're a good fit

Stephenson emphasized that you need to think about the bookstore's needs, not just your own. Study their programming and figure out where your title fits within that. "We don't just do events to fill space. Our events programming is tightly curated and we chose very carefully who and what to represent," said Stephenson. "Understand that you may need to convince us that it's a good fit *based on your knowledge of our existing programming*. Authors should think of it like pitching a piece to a publication: they wouldn't submit an essay to every publication in the Bay Area. They'd choose specific publications and know why it's a good fit for them. It's the same with pitching to bookstores."

According to Print: A Bookstore Events Coordinator Rose Heithoff, in addition to your book blurb, genre, and publisher contact information, "We would love to hear the connection the author has to the store and/or city where they're pitching. If you have a built-in audience, [such as] friends and family you can confidently promise will attend, this can help sway the decision process as well." A personal connection, or a special interest in the Portland area can go a long way, though it's "preferable, but by no means a requirement." Heithoff also advised keeping your email short and sweet, rather than adding extraneous information, so keep your CV and full byline listings to yourself.

Plan your book tour schedule wisely

While you may want to reach out to multiple bookstores in a given metropolitan area, this strategy can backfire, since stores are looking to hold unique events and draw large crowds. Politics and Prose's Woollen advised, "It's best to avoid scheduling too many events in the same

area at the same time, since spreading the wealth too much often leads to under-attended programs. We hope to be the first event for a book in the area, which can then be followed by private parties or other organizations' events."

Be patient

Patience and understanding are important, since they're busy and juggling both immediate events and planning future ones. Woollen of Politics and Prose said, "We're unable to host every author we'd like to. There are cycles during the year when workload ramps up significantly, which can cause some delays in scheduling."

If a bookstore turns you down, don't write them off; they may be too busy this year, but might be open to hosting you at a future date.

Once you book an event, make sure the store knows you're doing everything you can to promote it. "We love it when authors share our posts or make their own and tag us so we can return the favor. Social media is such a huge element of event planning, and the more eyes on it, especially as we get closer to the event, the better the chances are for turnout," said Heithoff.

Rachel Kramer Bussel is the editor of over 60 anthologies, including the Cleis Press Best Women's Erotica of the Year series and teaches erotica writing workshops around the world and online. She writes about book publishing for Forbes online, and has been published in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Marie Claire and other publications. Follow her [@raquelita](#) on Twitter.

Tricking the Limbic System into Giving You the Right Drugs at the Right Time

How to let your inner executive be the boss

By Patricia Burroughs



In last month's *Nink*, I explained how procrastination isn't simply a matter of willpower or character, but rather a product of a brain battling with itself over who's the boss—the executive in the prefrontal cortex or the bodyguard in the limbic system.

Most if not all of the time, we procrastinate because doing The Thing is not fun or pleasant, which means we have a negative feeling about it. It happens quickly:

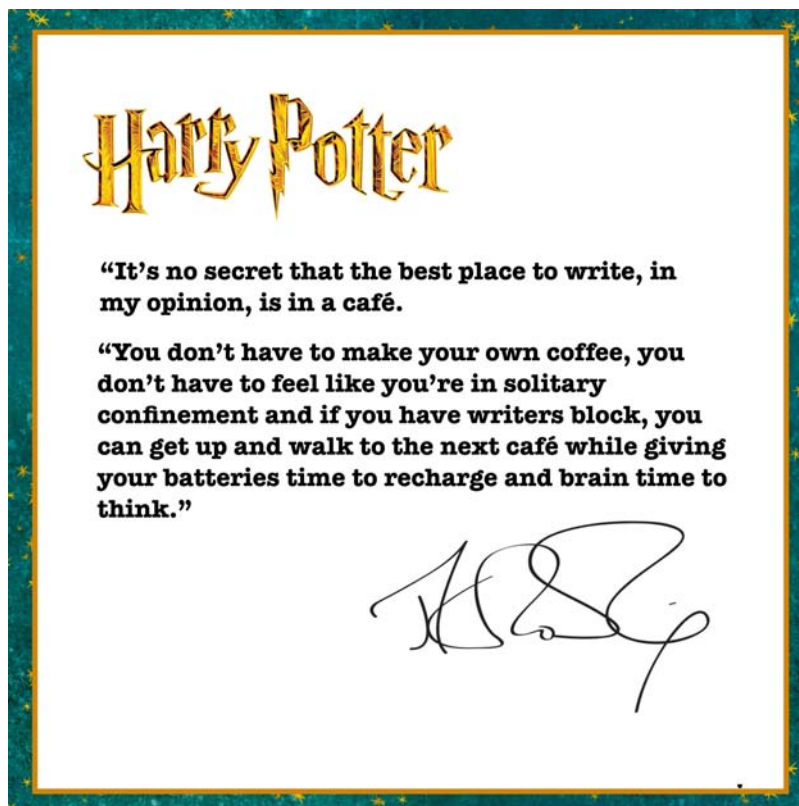
"In 1/32 of a second we become fearful and we can't think! THAT is what procrastination really is."
– [Maribeth Blunt](#),, psychotherapist & life coach

But we are not without weapons, although nothing will work all the time and some things may never work. One of the best and often immediate ways to connect with your prefrontal cortex is to conjure up a good mood. The limbic system is designed to play nicely with your executive functions and even fuel them with stuff that helps you stay focused, energized, and happy with what you're doing. One suggestion is to visualize happy times with the activity you're avoiding, simply because doing so establishes the good mood and lack of stress you need to write.

One reason video game designers let people pile up the points before the game starts getting tougher is to give repetition, practice and confidence, so that when the game gets harder, you don't just walk away. Yes, they get you hooked by letting you win a lot before they make it hard. Creating a habit of writing is similar.

Break the writing or project you're avoiding into small bits, and recognize that if it's not working, you haven't broken it down into small enough bits. If you're not writing at all, any progress is good. Remember, you're tricking your brain into doing what you need it to do. No matter how ridiculously small you have to make your goal, do it. You may do this more than once in the day. Or start and go a little further. Or a lot further.

Or get to the very end of that goal and stop—even if your 100-word goal ends in midsentence. Do it. That was the goal and you aced it! Setting a goal that you know you can achieve is vital.



Gamification

If your brain has a hyperactive rescue mode and wants to fight-or-flight you away from anything that makes you feel tense, stressed, or just plain negative, the key may be to cultivate habits that are as entertaining as video games or YouTube.

No, really. It's a thing. There is a wide selection of apps that turn establishing productive habits into games, or close to it. (If you want a fun and motivating introduction to gamification along with some unexpected games to turn loose on your life [zombies!], let Jessica at [HowtoADHD](#) tell you [How to Turn Your Life Into a Video Game](#).)

[Habatica](#) is a full-fledged RPG (role-playing game), complete with the ability to level up, buy gear, earn gold coins, etc. However, to reap those and other fun rewards, you don't fight battles. You get experience or health points each day for each "habit" you are able to check (you did the good habits, refrained from the bad ones). You write the habits (write a chapter, write a newsletter, write two sentences, however you've set it up). There's a to-do list for one-off tasks that don't repeat, and the rewards you set for yourself, whether it's a treat, an episode of your favorite television show, or time on Facebook. When you reach a high enough level you start accruing money and pieces of armor. It's a real game that even lets you form a "party" with other people you know, adding a social element.

[SuperBetter \(overview of book and app\) \(tutorial\)](#) may have the most dramatic storyline. Dr. Jane McGonigal had been developing games for 10 years when she suffered a debilitating concussion that wasn't healing, was causing horrific pain, and left her so depressed she contemplated suicide. Instead, she developed Jane the Concussion Slayer. That game became SuperBetter, and it's designed to work for you while you play. You create quests (daily tasks and habits), create a secret identity (which is half the fun), challenges, power ups (tiny moves that give an emotional or physical lift) and more. Your negative habits or mindsets are Bad Guys. Is there something you've always wanted to do? Make it a quest you're working toward. This app also has a social aspect.

[The Fabulous \(overview\) \(tutorial\)](#) is described by [Girlboss](#) as a sleek app that will help you stick to your goals.

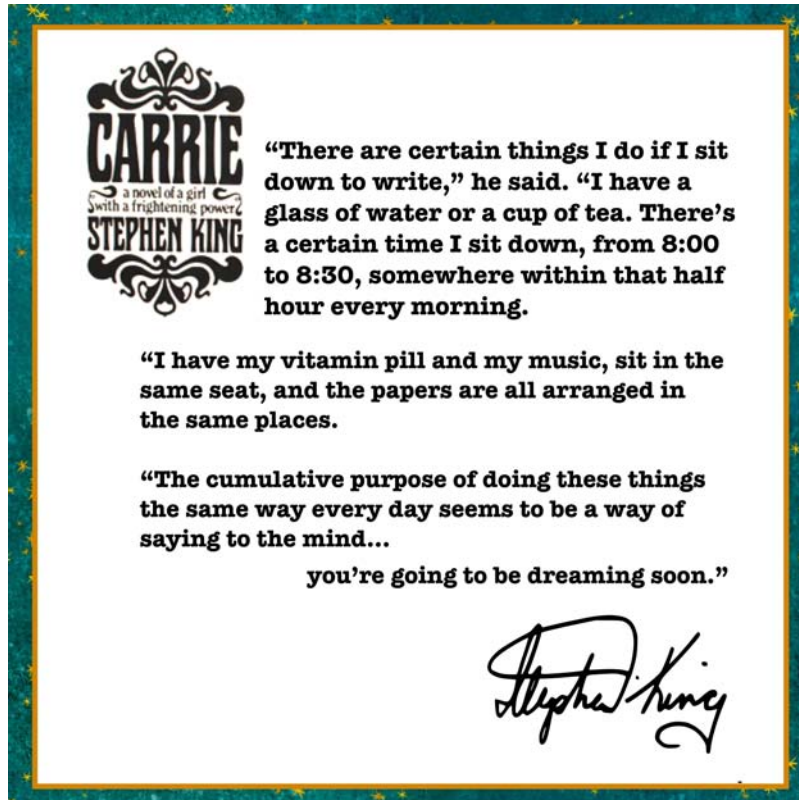
[Daylio \(overview\) \(tutorial\)](#) is a daily mood and activity tracker that lets you monitor the patterns of your emotions and establish new habits.

Finally, and perhaps saving the best for last, productivity consultant [Denis Duvauchelle](#) said, "Dopamine can be triggered with meaningful rewards, funny jokes and pleasant pictures. Have trouble motivating yourself to write? [Kitten every 100 words!](#)"

Rituals

Some writers find grounding and motivation in rituals that are creative, sensory, sometimes spiritual and/or religious—and can be designed to get you into the mood.

Remember the ongoing battle chronic procrastinators have? There are many ways to elevate that mood, and rituals are amazing tools.



One writer decided to take the plunge and write full time, but quickly discovered that since he didn't have to cram all of his writing into stolen hours from work and family, the new sense of freedom led to him frittering away his time. His solution was a simple two-step ritual. Every day once the house emptied, he quieted himself and stroked a mallet down a set of desktop chimes. As their vibrations slowed, he lit a candle, one that would burn for four hours. The chime was his attempt to establish a Pavlov's dog affect. Chime equaled time to write and he soon had no trouble diving into his work. But the candle was even more vital as once it was lit, it indicated his writing time. As it burned, his time grew shorter. He did allow himself to break as necessary, but even then he was aware that he was burning time, not to mention he had a burning candle he had to keep an eye on! His simple two steps provided a trigger [time to write] and mindfulness [time is burning].

Your ritual could be starting with a prayer. Or turning on music that fades into the background. Or using essential oils or incense.

"Make it so."

Finally, one of the most helpful tools has to do with establishing new habits—*fast*.

Not after 21 days or 60 days, but almost immediately. That may sound impossible but this technique is recommended in many academic and psychological circles and is worth trying.

Program yourself to take a positive action or to avoid a negative one through self-talk, either aloud or mentally.

Isolate the precise action you want to take. Then create the sentence—the mantra, perhaps—that you’re going to start saying. It can be a straightforward plan, simple in its execution. “After I finish loading the dishwasher tomorrow, then I’m going to sit down and write for awhile.”

That may sound unimpressive, but if you start saying this in the morning the day before, and if you write it on a post-it and stick it on your computer, or wherever you will see it most often, and if every time you see it, you either speak the words aloud or read them silently... I think you can take it from here. It’s unassuming, direct, and not exciting. But by the time you’ve matter-of-factly and repeatedly reminded yourself of your intention, after you load that dishwasher, sitting down to write is going to be a lot easier than it has been. You’ve been preparing your brain for it for over 24 hours. Have fun with it, if you want. Roll your eyes, laugh about it. Next morning you may laugh all the way to the chair.

Need some extra motivation? Link the action—in this case, writing—to something you want to do, before and after.

“After I drink my expensive, special occasion coffee that I only use for guests, then I’ll sit down and write [two sentences, two scenes, two chapters, two hours]. And when I’ve done that, I’ll go to the coffee house and pick up another bag of those special coffee beans.”

You’ve outwitted your brain because you sandwiched your writing between two things that will make your prefrontal cortex purr happily in anticipation.

Hey, you may have not only gotten yourself jumpstarted, but you might have just established an effective new writing ritual: bestowing yourself with alone-time and the “good” coffee before and after writing because you deserve it.

Because one of the most vital things you can do is develop habits and rituals that take care of *you*.

Patricia Burroughs has ADHD, dyscalculia, and associated cognitive disorders, all of which are disorders of executive function and the prefrontal cortex. She generally manages her issues through self-education, medication, and therapy. She is not a neurosurgeon nor is she a psychologist. She encourages you to seek more information if you want to understand the nitty-gritty of brain function beyond their squabbles, which may include professional help.

Clarifying Copyright

Supreme Court registration ruling changes little

By Mark Sableman



The headlines in March sounded ominous—The Supreme Court now requires copyright registrations. Yet another headache for authors and other copyright owners.

But before you reach for your headache remedy, or give up on preventing infringement of your books, let's talk through this development. It may not be that bad.

Remember first that copyright is an intangible right that comes into being automatically as soon as a creative work is “fixed in a tangible medium of expression.” That refers to when ink touches paper, when oil paint dries on canvas, and, in today's electronic world, when data are recorded on a computer hard drive, and pixels recorded on a camera memory drive. No filings, no formalities (not even a copyright notice) are required. Your intangible property right, a copyright, springs into existence magically. Think of it as a little imaginary cloud that hovers over your work, which you own, even if you lose possession of your tangible work (like your manuscript).

A copyright registration is related, but different. The registration records that intangible right, in the records of the US Copyright Office. You must apply for registration, describe your work, pay a fee, fill out a form, and satisfy the copyright office examiner that you have a real copyright. At the end of that process, you get a nice certificate.

That certificate is kind of like the key to the courthouse door, if and when you want to sue someone for infringement. That is what the law always said, and that is what the Supreme Court affirmed in March. You have your copyright (that intangible cloud-like right) from the outset, but to get into the courthouse, you need the registration, too.

The Copyright Act imposes this requirement of a registration as prerequisite to an infringement lawsuit. For years, the requirement was interpreted as “jurisdictional,” meaning no court had the power to entertain an infringement suit unless the copyright was first registered. In 2010, the Supreme Court ruled that the requirement wasn't a jurisdictional barrier, but just a formality to be satisfied. After that, different federal courts took different positions on

the nature of the formality—specifically, did it require an issued registration at the outset of a suit, or only sometime before final judgment? That’s what the Supreme Court answered in March, saying the formal requirement was that a registration was required before suit could be brought.

So a registration, it is now clear, is needed before you can go to court to enforce your copyright against an infringer.

But does that really change much? Not really.

First, you still have your copyright from the point of creation. And there are a lot of things you can do with that copyright, short of suing on it. You can proclaim your copyright, for example by placing a copyright notice on your work. You can write demand letters telling others to cease copying your work. You can file internet takedown notices if you find your work being infringed on the web.

Second, you were going to register that copyright anyway, weren’t you? If you write and publish books, the answer should be “yes.” Books are major endeavors, worthy the time and cost (\$55) of a copyright registration. If you ever grant others rights or permissions based on your book (for example, audio or translation rights, or the rights that Stephen Spielberg is itching to have for a movie version), you will want to have a registration, to make your ownership of the underlying rights clear to everyone.

And even before you ever make a rights license, or sue someone for infringement, it is smart to timely register your work, because of the special rights that derive from a timely registration. As noted above, registration is always required to get into the courthouse with a suit. But if you register timely—within the first three months after publication, or before an infringer infringes it—you get the added benefit of special remedies. The owner of a timely registered work can win statutory damages (damages awarded even if lost profits aren’t proven) and possibly attorneys’ fees.

Those additional remedies are the strongest reason to register your work on a timely basis. They are important even if you never get inside a courthouse. Consider—what’s more powerful, a cease-and-desist letter saying, “Please stop infringing my copyright,” or one that says, “Because I have timely registered my copyright, you are facing liability for up to \$150,000 in statutory damages”? Professional photographers almost always timely register their photos these days, because of the way a timely registration powerfully encourages infringers to settle claims.

Next, in your industry—book publishing—registrations should be the norm. Commercial publishers almost always require that their books be timely registered, and indeed most of them handle the process themselves to make sure that it is done right. Publishers know how much work went into your book, and how terrible it would be to see someone infringe it, so they have made it their standard operating procedure to protect your book in the best possible way, with a timely registration. If you self-publish, wouldn’t you want to do the same thing?

Finally, if that \$55 application fee, or multi-screen form, bother you, or if for any other reason you haven’t timely registered your copyright, that doesn’t mean you can never get in the courthouse. For purposes of bringing a suit, you can register your copyright anytime, even many years after your work was created or published. You can even register your copyright if

you no longer have possession of the work itself. J.D. Salinger, for example, registered his copyrights in letters he had written years before, which friends had donated to university archives. Because he registered so late in the game, he couldn't seek statutory damages or attorneys' fees, but he sued, and won, and got an injunction prohibiting a biographer from quoting those letters.

Maybe you are still concerned about the registration process because it seems so formal and legalistic. But it may be more flexible than you think. You can readily transfer a registration from one person or entity to another (like from an individual to an LLC), if needed, without losing the timeliness of the registration. Your registration protects your book as a whole, and will continue to be useful even if you retitle it or make other minor changes. Don't feel you need to file new applications because of minor changes, though it is probably wise to do so in the case of major revisions or reworkings. Because of the Berne Copyright Convention, your U.S. registration is useful in protecting you around the world. If your work incorporates writings or graphics of others, there's a place on the application form for explaining that.

And even if you are still puzzled by some registration issues, go ahead and give your application your best shot, taking care to explain if there are previous versions and if you have used third-party content. We've seen technical mistakes in lots of registrations, and courts usually tolerate these mistakes unless the evidence strongly suggests an intent to mislead the copyright office.

Considering all this, did the new Supreme Court decision really change anything? Not really. It simply imposed (really re-imposed) a formality for filing suit. You still have your intangible copyright from the moment of creation. You still have every incentive to timely register the copyright in your book. And you still have a means of getting into court later, even if you didn't timely register.

Save your headache remedy for when you really need it. Like when you start your next book, and begin staring at that blank screen or sheet of paper.

Mark Sableman is a partner at Thompson Coburn LLP in St. Louis, MO, where his practice focuses on intellectual property, media, technology, and internet issues.

An Insider Look At Traditional Publishing

Interview with Stacey Donovan, director of Hallmark Publishing

By Leigh Duncan



Stacey Donovan

This continues the feature for Nink in which NINC members interview agents, editors, and marketing professionals so that authors can get an in-depth look at how to network with traditional publishing. All questions came from those culled from questions asked on the traditional publishing loop, some verbatim. If you have a house/editor/marketing professional you'd like to see interviewed or if you'd like to volunteer to do an interview, please email: ninkeditor@gmail.com.

Hallmark Channel movies attract “an average audience of 3.5 million viewers and 641,000 women aged 25 to 54, the target demographic,” according to Jonathan Berr in *Hollywood & Entertainment*. Seeking to expand that market to readers, Hallmark Publishing launched its line of sweet romances in 2017 with the release of several books based on the Hallmark Channel’s most popular Christmas movies. I was honored to be among that first group of authors and doubly so when my book, *Journey Back To Christmas*, was selected as the line’s debut release. In the two years since, it’s been my absolute privilege to work closely with Stacey Donovan, the director of Hallmark Publishing, on three additional books. Stacey, the acquiring editor for Hallmark Publishing, earned her MFA in Creative Writing at the University of Arizona in Tucson and was previously an editorial director and a Master Writer at Hallmark in Kansas City.

My past experience with traditional publishers taught me that the opportunity to discuss upcoming projects or to pitch a proposal with someone at Stacey’s level rated somewhere on the scale between *rare*, *very rare* and *never in your wildest dreams*. But Stacey is very “hands-on,” shepherding each book—and author—from initial concept through finished product and thus insuring that each release fits perfectly into the Hallmark Publishing imprint. Her knowledge and drive are legendary—seriously, I don’t think she ever sleeps. She’s the author of several children’s books and gift books, a reference book for writers, and four romance novels, both under her own name and a pen name. She now lives in Los Angeles. You can connect with her

on Twitter: [Twitter.com/donovanesque](https://twitter.com/donovanesque). She is a fierce advocate for her authors and their books. Plus, she's hands-down, one of the nicest people I've ever met.

Below follows my interview with Stacey, whose answers represent only her and Hallmark Publishing, not any other industry professionals.

1. Besides “writing the best book,” what are things an author can do to advance their career? What are some “career” busters or mistakes that traditional published authors may not even know they are making?

Most published authors probably know this, but it's so important that I'll say it anyway: don't underestimate the value of a strong premise. A hook that makes agents, editors, corporate buyers, and readers think, “Well, I wonder how *that* plays out” is pure gold.

Treat others with respect and hit your deadlines. You may think everyone needs to vent, or it's no big deal if something's a little late, but these kinds of things will limit an author.

The publishing process can bring frustrations. If you can take a breath and approach issues in a reasonable way, you're more likely to get good short-term results, and either way, you'll have a better reputation. And publishers, agents, and editors should also treat you with respect. Authors are the reason they have their jobs, after all.

2. How can an author be the best author for their publisher? How can authors be part of that team? How can authors create sustainability in their careers and what steps should an author take for achieving that?

Talk to your publisher about what their marketing plans are. Sometimes they have reasons for what they're doing, like taking a certain approach to the cover design or choosing a particular release date, that won't be obvious to you unless you ask.

For a sustainable career, take yourself seriously. Know what your goals are. Know what your personal brand is. If you're true to your vision, inevitable setbacks or disappointments don't have to throw you off course.

3. What are traditional publishers such as Hallmark Publishing doing for their new-to-them authors (anyone other than your *NYT/USA Today* best sellers)? What type of house-wide plan and process should authors expect?

I'll talk a little first about the acquisition process. We only do sweet contemporary romance and a little bit of cozy mystery. We acquire most of our books on proposal only, from agented authors (plus a few authors I invite to pitch because I like their writing). The programming team has to greenlight a book proposal. Lots of proposals don't move forward. Even when they do, we'll usually need one or two rounds of changes to make sure every plot point makes sense, the character arcs are satisfying, and it's in the Hallmark vein.

We will also acquire some books through our open submission periods when anyone can submit a complete manuscript. We have a very strong house style, and it can be hard to hit it, but it's possible!

I think the editorial process is fairly standard. We do at least one round of developmental edits to shape up the story, and then we do a round of line edits to polish the prose. We do three

rounds of proofreading total. We format our books with unique illustrations at the chapter headings and section breaks that tie into the story. For every book, we have an original recipe developed that ties into the story somehow, and that goes in the back. It's really important for us to make the books feel special.

We release books as ebooks, print, and audiobook. We're moving quickly toward wider bricks-and-mortar distribution, and we're also selling the books through more and more of our Hallmark Gold Crown stores. It's great as a publisher to have your own branded retail channel.

4. How important is an author's social media when choosing to purchase a series or author?

If an author has a huge following on Twitter, Instagram, their Facebook author page, or their blog, that's certainly a plus, but it's okay if they don't. On social media, I love seeing authors who interact with others with kindness and/or a sense of humor; it makes me think they'll be good at representing the brand and promoting the book.

5. Will you consider purchasing authors who perhaps need new branding (such as a new name) because of low sales? When should the rebranding begin? Before or after the sale?

Honestly, we mostly focus on the story itself and whether we think it'll make people smile and warm their hearts. A slow past history doesn't mean you have to change your name. Our Hallmark name will already be on the book.

6. When authors say, "My publisher did nothing for me!" they may not be aware that there's a basic minimum of promotion every house gives a book. What does Hallmark do for an author in the way of marketing?

Some of the things we do to market a book are fairly standard and include getting reviews through NetGalley, media outlets, and book bloggers, Goodreads ads, BookBub featured new release placement and ads, enhanced placement and signage in bricks-and-mortar stores, book signings, marketing the book through our mailing list, and social media support. As a new publisher, we started out with short lead times. Now that lead times are getting longer, we're pursuing more opportunities, like features in magazines.

7. What stands out about your publisher's approach to marketing?

I have such a good answer for this! One way or another, your book with Hallmark is going to be on TV! The books are featured on the Hallmark Channel in commercials and on segments on our morning show, Home and Family (we've had a couple of authors make guest appearances on the show, too). Sometimes actors from our movies will also discuss a title on our movie preview specials.

The most exciting thing we're doing is turning at least a few of their books into Hallmark movies. The first one that went into development, *The Christmas Company*, was Alys Murray's first published novel, and she submitted it to us before she had an agent. A movie adaptation is an extra payday for the author, and it also lifts awareness for their book. I think a movie deal is great for an author's career.

8. What is your biggest success, or your most surprising success/fail?

It's too soon to say! Right now, I'm just proud that we've gotten it up and running. In less than two years we've gone from doing companion novels released in ebook form, to print, to original romance acquisitions, to adding cozy mystery acquisitions, to getting wider distribution in bricks-and-mortar stores, to adding audiobooks.

9. What have you just bought in each genre, and what direction is that genre heading?

My three most recent acquisitions were a sweet romance with a cowboy next door, from a *USA Today* bestselling author; a cozy mystery with a little bit of a *Moonlighting* vibe, if anyone remembers that TV show, from an award-winning cozy author; and a sweet summer romance set in Miami in which quinceañera celebrations figure prominently in the plot, from a NYT bestselling author. I'm so excited about the titles we've got coming up!

Hallmark is really the counter-trend to a lot of gritty and edgy content out there. While I'm influenced by trends, I'm more guided by ideals—like the importance of following one's heart, gratitude and appreciation for the present, and the importance of human connections: friends, family, and community. And if we can convey those with a sense of humor, all the better. Overall, we are timeless rather than trendy.

10. Besides having a great manuscript, what does an author need to know about writing for Hallmark?

We have a very specific vibe, and the best way to hit it is to watch the movies.

11. How can an author support their trad published books in ways that the publisher perhaps can't or won't? What can authors do? What promo works?

The best thing an author can focus on is their personal newsletter. Any opportunities that authors can find to chat about their process or their thinking behind the characters is great. I think readers really enjoy that.

12. How does a professional author handle ghosting (never getting a reply) from a potential editor who'd requested a work?

I really try not to have this happen, but it does, because of my heavy workload and the incredible volume of email I get. The best way to handle it is to forward the email. Make sure the documents are still attached! Say something like, "Hey, I didn't hear back on this yet, so I'm bringing this to the top of your inbox. Hope to hear from you soon!"

13. If you could look into your crystal ball for 2019 and beyond, where do you see the market headed? What trends might be coming? What do readers want more of, and what are readers tired of seeing?

I think with any trend or any market, authors need to consider how, or if, it aligns with their true passion. You have to know what your deep-down intentions are as an author. What are you trying to give your readers? Comfort? Escape? Laughter? An intense emotional experience? A reminder of what really matters most in life? A little more bravery to get through

the day? This is a tough and mercurial business. At least make sure you love the process of writing itself.

14. Tell me all about the exciting things at Hallmark Publishing that make it a great company to work with.

I originally pitched this publishing business to Crown Media as an extension of the channels. It turned out they'd been thinking about it, too, so we just went for it. What I love about Crown Media is that it's so action-oriented. Everything moves so fast: the new Hallmark Drama channel, the new movies-on-demand service, the new smartphone app, the new podcast. It's a surprisingly small company considering what big things we accomplish. And we're so committed to being a positive voice in the world.

15. Tell me a little bit about why you love this job.

I've been lucky enough to work with such professional and talented authors, and wonderful agents, too. I absolutely love seeing a manuscript shape up into a terrific book. I want people to be in a great mood after reading our books, and when I hear that they are, that's fantastic.

I'd like to thank Stacey for taking the time out of her busy schedule to answer my questions for *Nink*. Hallmark is normally closed to unagented submissions; however, unagented authors may submit completed manuscripts during the open-submission period in September. Details are available on the website. All authors who are interested in submitting a sweet romance or cozy mystery to Hallmark Publishing should familiarize themselves with the publishing guidelines, which are available at <https://www.hallmarkchannel.com/hallmark-publishing/write-for-us>.



Harlequin published Leigh Duncan's first book in 2010. Since then, she has written and published over two dozen books and novellas, including eight for Harlequin. Her upcoming Heart's Landing series, will be released by Hallmark Publishing in 2020. She has also indie-published several books and re-releases. Leigh spends her free time cooking and enjoying her family. She lives on Central Florida's East Coast.

Unearthing Hidden Clues About Your Creativity

Well Being & Perfectionism, Part 7

By Denise A. Agnew



Since December, I've discussed the process of discovering hidden clues to what may impede your creativity. In this final installment, I'm focusing on whether creating/writing is essential to your well-being and if perfectionism is crippling your ability to finish projects. In Part One of the series, I asked you to thoroughly answer several questions, so if you want to see the full list, check out the December 2018 issue of *Nink* in the members-only section.

Over the last few months we've covered a gambit of questions that give insight into creativity and a writer's journey through rough waters. Our last two questions wrap things up:

1. Do you think writing/creating is essential to your well-being?
2. Do you use perfectionism as an excuse to never finish a book?

Creation and well-being: yea or nay?

Like most creative people, most of my life I've been willing to steep myself in self-examination. Creative people want to understand what makes us tick and discover better ways to live. For this reason, several years ago, I found myself roiling in creativity angst. I was mulling over, as I had too many times before, the concept of leaving the writing arena entirely. The life coach I worked with had excellent questions for me, but one hit the mark. She asked, "What do you feel when you think about not writing a novel or short story again?" I had to get out the tissues because the thought of not writing fiction again was painful. That revelation was a turning point for me with my writing. I learned that writing is a part of me that I can't toss in the bin. Whether or not I publish my work isn't the point. Do I write because I love it? Because it is truly who I am? That day proved to me that I wouldn't stop writing, and probably won't any time soon.

How do you feel about the idea of not writing a novel or short story again? Take a few moments for deep reflection. If you feel relief at the idea of not writing anymore, that's a

legitimate answer. Relief may mean now is an excellent time to explore new pursuits, creative or not.

If the idea of stopping the writing journey pains you deeply, it probably means you're not ready to chuck your creative dreams. It's time to understand why you think it is even an option for you to stop.

There are just as many reasons to continue writing as there are to quit, but most of us don't think of it this way. We are caught up in the concept of being the career author who is trying to make a living. As most of us know, making a living wage as a writer can be extremely difficult. Many writers start off with the idea that writing for money is the only reason to do it. I have heard writers say, "What is the point if you can't make any money at it?" Or they are confused about why they started writing in the first place. They think it will be a fun and easy way to generate income. They don't begin with an understanding of the real reason they want to write. If it is all about the money, or even mostly about the money, I would suggest to those individuals that maybe they should pick another career before they even begin, because making money is far more important to them than the actual writing. Perhaps they need a career where a steady income is more of a guarantee.

If creating is your first goal, the chances of you continuing the writing quest for the long term is far more likely. It also means that even if the money dries up at some point, you will still find a way to enjoy your writing...one way or the other. It is essential to your well-being.

Perfectionism vs. doing good work

Webster's defines perfectionism as a disposition to regard anything short of perfection as unacceptable.

What is the difference between perfectionism and good work ethic? Many writers are hard-working and their stories are amazing. A strong work ethic and a desire to create high-quality books is admirable. Unless it's keeping you from completing your work.

Many writers who spend years on one project have other life events preventing them from completing a project. A death in the family or an illness is a good example. Most of the time, though, it is the ever-present specter of perfectionism that says their work will never be good enough which gets in the way.

Perfectionist writers are stubborn. They believe going over the manuscript 22 times before it even reaches a critique is the best way to go. I have known writers who work on a book, constantly adding and subtracting, critiquing, reviewing, ruminating and worrying for years. They may tell themselves it's because they like to do a good job, and that a novel takes as long as it takes. Sometimes these beliefs mask the real problem.

Self-esteem issues are often at the forefront. While there are dozens of ways poor self-esteem can handicap a person's life, it can manifest as perfectionism in a writing career. The author tells themselves repeatedly that their writing isn't good enough. If they never finish the story and tell themselves it's because of a virtuous reason like strong work ethic ... well, they never release the book into the world where it can be criticized. The writer is trying to avoid one pain and instead creates another.

Recently a friend told me about a newbie writer who had sent her a book three years in a row to edit. Now this friend of mine is a bit of a perfectionist herself and an excellent and enthusiastic editor. The book needed a ton of work. Considering how detailed my editor friend is, the author probably could have run with the story after the edit and all would have been good. The author, though, felt a year later it needed another edit. Now the person has come back to her a third time asking for an edit. I suggested to my editor friend that maybe it was time for this writer to create a brand-new book.

Eventually never releasing the book can become as painful as the possibility of criticism. The author is in a double bind that perfectionism created.

One way to curb perfectionism is to allow writer friends to hold you accountable and point out when they perceive that you're procrastinating and haven't sent it out for a critique and/or edit.

Another, perhaps even more important possibility, would be to consult a therapist about self-esteem issues that might manifest themselves in overenthusiastic perfectionism. If it's affecting your writing this way there's a good chance it impacts other areas of your life as well.

This isn't a condemnation of people who work for many months or years on a project. It's an explanation for why perfectionism can be a slippery slope that deserves examination.

In conclusion...

I hope you've discovered through this article and the others in the series that your creative life is well worth exploring and continuing. You deserve to make all your creative dreams come true.

Denise A. Agnew is the award-winning author of over 69 novels and screenplays. Denise's novels Love from The Ashes and Blackout were optioned for film/TV by Where's Lucy? Productions, Bright Frontier Films and MDR Entertainment. Denise is a Writer/Producer (Where's Lucy? Productions, Happy Catastrophe Productions, Bright Frontier Films), a paranormal investigator, Reiki Master, and Certified Creativity Coach. As a creativity coach, Denise assists anyone in the creative arts to maintain lifelong creativity. You can find her at www.deniseagnew.com and www.creativepencoaching.com.

The Mad Scribbler

GOT-o-mania

By Laura Resnick



“There’s nothing more powerful than a story.”

—Tyrion Lannister, *Game of Thrones* (2019)

There’s a hilarious and affectionate music video on YouTube, [Write Like the Wind](#) (*George R.R. Martin*), written and performed by the comedic musical duo Paul & Storm (Paul Sabourin and Greg “Storm” DiCostanzo), known for their humorous songs about geek culture. The three-minute video opens with a satisfied reader coming to the end of a very thick novel, closing the book with a satisfied sigh... and then launching into a peppy musical complaint about the long wait for the next book in the series.

The novel the reader has just closed is *A Dance With Dragons*, the fifth book in the bestselling epic fantasy series, *A Song of Ice and Fire*, written by George R.R. Martin (popularly referred to as GRRM).

That novel, more than 1,000 pages in hardcover, was published in 2011, when online bookselling and the growing ebook market were generating dark predictions about the fate of traditional bookstores. *A Dance With Dragons*, released that July, sold so well that one article I read credited GRRM with almost single-handedly reviving the bricks-and-mortar bookstore industry that summer.

Yet, by then, many fans of the series were increasingly vocal about their frustration with the long wait for each book. *Game of Thrones*, the first novel, debuted in 1996. There was a three-year wait for each of the next two books—which wasn’t unreasonable, given how long these novels are. (The five books so far published in this series range from 293,000 to 415,00 words in length.) But then there was a five-year wait for the next book, followed by a six-year wait for *Dragons*.

Good God, readers cried, were they really going to have to wait *another* six years for the next book? **Unacceptable!**

(As it turns out, they have so far been waiting eight years.)

I read some of the comments that disgruntled readers made back then (and are still making now). I completely understand being anxious to read a favorite writer's next book, just as I understand feeling desperate to know what happens next in a story; readers understandably wish the writer would get on with it. But I do *not* understand being a raging jackass about it. The vitriol, viciousness, and chest-beating hysteria I saw reminded me sharply that the word "fan" derives from "fanatic."

Such fans complained, often in deliberately rude language, that they feared GRRM would die before finishing the series; look at how old and fat he is, the guy is gonna croak without fulfilling his responsibility to his readers. (A 2014 [article](#) is titled, "George R.R. Martin says fuck you to fans who say he'll die before completing the series.") They chastised him on his blog, where he wrote about his travels, his other writing projects, and his various non-writing interests (he collects toy knights and medieval miniatures, and he's a major supporter of a [wolf sanctuary](#)). How *dare* he, fans demanded, spend time watching football or turning a local abandoned theater into a cultural center while *his next book was unfinished*? What right did he have to spend his time anywhere *but* his keyboard?

In fact, as far back as 2009, bestselling author Neil Gaiman posted a [blog](#) about the toxic entitlement directed at GRRM, in which he wrote a line that has been referenced often since then (including in Paul & Storm's *Write Like the Wind*): "George R.R. Martin is not your bitch."

But by the time *A Dance With Dragons* arrived in bookstores, the first season of HBO's adaptation of the series had already aired, and so public pressure on GRRM to write faster only increased.

His workload increased, too. GRRM, who had spent years as a writer and producer in Hollywood, became a consultant for the TV production, and he wrote scripts for several episodes, and he was co-executive producer for all eight seasons of the series.

As the epic story unfolded on TV season after season, the long-standing questions became more persistent and widespread, now discussed in major media and routinely mentioned on TV, not just fretted over by interested readers and vitriolic fans: When would GRRM finish the remaining two novels planned for his series, *The Winds of Winter* and *A Dream of Spring*? Would the TV show overtake the books? (Spoiler: Yes.)

HBO's *Game of Thrones* (GOT) wasn't "just" a hit. The *New York Times* recently [asserted](#) that GOT "arguably has been the defining pop culture phenomenon of this decade."

The show has so far won 47 Emmy Awards, as well as many other awards, and various publications name it among the best TV shows of all time. Tens of millions of people have watched it. The combined popularity of the TV show and the novels have inspired the launch of several video games, a slew of GOT-related merchandise, companion books to the TV series, companion books to the novels, a cookbook (*A Feast of Ice & Fire*), music, YouTube videos, and plans for spin-off TV series. There is even a GOT rap-music album called *Catch the Throne*.

As a recent *Mashable* [article](#) notes, a number of GOT-specific phrases have entered popular slang, such as:

- Winter is coming
- Is it known

- Sweet summer child
- Dracarys
- You win or you die
- You know nothing, Jon Snow

Many babies born in recent years are named after GOT characters. So are many animals. (I volunteer for a cat rescue group. Two years ago, I collected some five-week-old orphan kittens from a non-profit clinic, where a staffer processing them at intake had given these tiny, wide-eyed fluffballs names like Robert Barratheon, Tywin Lannister, and Aegon Targaryen.)

A language-teaching app called [Duolingo](#)—typically used for learning Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, etc.—also offers a course in High Valyrian, a (fictional) language in GOT. And there are several books available to help you learn Dothraki, another GOT language.

“Politicians began to drape themselves in the series’ imagery, aggrandizing the show by using it as a tool of politicking,” [Slate](#) wrote recently.

According to [Foreign Affairs](#), “Among the foreign-policy intelligentsia, and society broadly, interpreting *Game of Thrones* (and the book series by George R.R. Martin that the show is based on) has become a cottage industry. Every political analyst, historian, or theorist has his or her take on what lessons can be drawn from the story for real-world foreign policy.”

As the final season of *Game of Thrones* began airing earlier this year, GOT-o-mania [seized](#) New York City. A West Village fast food joint served Dracarys burgers and Dragonglass milkshakes. For \$569/night, you could stay in “Lannister’s Lair,” a midtown hotel room complete with fur throws, dragon eggs, wine goblets and a GOT-themed menu. GOT [pedicabs](#) (a bicycle-taxi wherein the rider sits on a replica of the series’ iconic Iron Throne) have roamed the streets of several cities.

Shortly before the final episode aired last month, the Workforce Institute [warned](#), “Our latest research, conducted by The Harris Poll, says a lot of people will miss work, come in late, or be somewhat less productive than normal on Monday as a result of watching the long awaited series finale of *Game of Thrones*.”

“The problem with *Game of Thrones*,” according to the *Irish Times*, “is it almost became bigger than life.”

And what is that like for the novelist who gave birth to all this?

“I try not to look at the big picture, ever,” he said in an interview last year. “Then it becomes incredibly intimidating.”

Well, yes, I would think so. Undoubtedly rewarding, gratifying, exciting, and humbling; but also intimidating.

GRRM has said in multiple interviews, as well as on his blog, that he’s still working on the next book, *The Winds of Winter*. He’s also still very busy with other things. He recently [became](#) the new Chief World Builder for a multi-media collective, and he’s involved in multiple television projects that are in various stages of development.

The final season of GOT, which had very high viewership, met with mixed reactions. *Very* mixed; 1.6 million fans (as of June 1) signed a petition demanding the final season be remade—this time with “competent writers.” Since there were no finished novels available to adapt after

A Dance With Dragons, GRRM and the show-runners discussed his plans for the remaining two books in detail, so the writers and producers would have a framework for finishing the TV series.

GRRM has publicly affirmed his support for the TV show's controversial final episodes. It's unclear from various vague statements how much GRRM's final planned GOT novel, *A Dream of Spring*, will resemble the TV show's culmination. So readers will continue to anticipate a final novel that is likely to take years to write, as the time passes too slowly for them and too quickly for the author—who's in the strange position of being under pressure to reveal to legions of fans how the end of his story does or doesn't resemble the adaptation of his story.

"No one is happy," says Tyrion, GOT's most popular character, in the final TV episode, "which makes it a good compromise, I suppose."

Laura Resnick is the author of novels, short stories, and nonfiction.

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Newsletter

Propose an article: <https://ninc.com/newsletter/propose-an-article/>

Submit a letter to the editor: <https://ninc.com/newsletter/submit-letter-to-editor/>

Newsletter archives: <https://ninc.com/newsletter/news-archive/>

Best of Nink in paperback: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/best-of-nink/>

Website (you must be logged in to access these services)

Legal Fund: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/legal-fund/>

Pro Services Directory: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/pro-services-directory/>

Sample Letters: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/sample-letters/>

Articles & Links: <https://ninc.com/member-benefits/articles-and-links/>

Welcome Packet: http://ninc.com/system/assets/uploads/2017/01/2017_New_Member_Welcome_Packet-public.pdf

Member discounts

As described in the March issue of *Nink*, NINC members can use a professional filing service to set up a new entity for free: you pay only the state fees and a shipping & handling fee. See details about this exclusive offer for NINC members from SmallBiz.com, Inc. on the [Member Discounts](#) page.

IngramSpark has updated their offer of free title setup for print, ebook and print/ebook until January 31, 2020. At that time they'll evaluate how often we use it, so by all means, use this nice perk and help us keep the discount! You'll find more information, as well as the code to use, on our [Members Benefits and Discounts](#) page, along with a list of various other professional discounts that are available to NINC members.

Volunteer

One of the greatest benefits of NINC is the opportunity to volunteer your talents to benefit other members—which pays incredible and unexpected dividends in networking and knowledge. Learn more about volunteer opportunities here: <https://ninc.com/members-only/open-positions/>

Open positions include:

- Social Media Committee
- Tweet Team
- Recruiting New Members
- 2019 Conference Reporter
- Anything!



Founded in 1989

NINC Statement of Principle

Novelists, Inc., in acknowledgment of the crucial creative contributions novelists make to society, asserts the right of novelists to be treated with dignity and in good faith; to be recognized as the sole owners of their literary creations; to be fairly compensated for their creations when other entities are profiting from those creations; and to be accorded the respect and support of the society they serve.

Founders

- Rebecca Brandewyne
- Janice Young Brooks
- Jasmine Cresswell
- Maggie Osborne
- Marianne Shock

2019 Board of Directors

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

- President: Wayne Stinnett
- President-Elect: Alyssa Day
- Secretary: Sue Phillips
- Treasurer: Pam McCutcheon
- Newsletter Editor: Michele Dunaway
- Advisory Council Representative: Lou Aronica

Advisory Council

- Lou Aronica
- Brenda Hiatt Barber
- Linda Barlow
- Jean Brashear
- Janice Young Brooks
- Laura Parker Castoro
- Meredith Efken
- Donna Fletcher
- Kay Hooper
- Barbara Keiler
- Julie Leto

- Pat McLaughlin
- Kasey Michaels
- Julie Ortolon
- Diana Peterfreund
- Pat Rice
- Erica Ridley
- Marianne Shock
- Vicki Lewis Thompson
- Victoria Thompson
- Steven Womack

2019 Committees

- *Complete committee member listings are available on the website. Many committee positions are open and looking for new volunteers.*
- 2019 Conference Committee:
 - Conference Director: Mel Jolly
 - Programming: Alyssa Day
 - Sponsorship: Rochelle Paige
 - Logistics: Karen Fox
 - Registration: Mindy Neff
- Authors Coalition Rep: Laura Phillips & Wayne Stinnett
 - Social Media Committee:
 - Chair: Jenna Kernan
 - Rick Gualteieri
 - Lisa Hughey
 - Membership Committee
 - Chair: Sarah Woodbury
 - Boyd Craven
 - *Nink* Newsletter
 - Editor: Michele Dunaway
 - Assistant Editor: Susan Anderson
 - Copy Editor: Cynthia Moyer
 - Production Manager: Laura Resnick
 - Nominating Committee:
 - Emilie Richards
 - Barbara Dunlop
 - Tawdra Kandle
 - Karen King
 - Pat Van Wie
 - Technology Committee
 - Nick Thacker
 - Elizabeth Ann West
 - Jamie McFarlane
 - Erica Ridley
 - Discount Program Chair: Emilie Richards
 - Volunteer Jobs (Just One Thing) Coordinator: Lois Lavrisa

Central Coordinator

Novelists, Inc. c/o Terese Ramin

P.O. Box 54, Hartland MI 48353

admin@ninc.com

Address changes may be made on the website.

***Nink* Newsletter**

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To request reprint rights or to submit an article proposal, please contact [the editor](#).

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